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HARRIETTE WILSON'S MEMOIRS

Harriette Wilson's MEMOIRS

OF HERSELF AND OTHERS

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With a Preface by
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INTRODUCTION

To the student of the History of Manners, and even to those unaccustomed to give so grand a name to their natural curiosity, there can be few greater pleasures than to read a volume of confessions. When those confessions are not the work of a heavily reminiscent statesman, but of a light woman with a grievance, still youthful and still unrepentant, and when the span of her narrative covers so interesting a period as the Age of the Regent, that pleasure is increased tenfold.

Yet those who approach this work hoping for the new thrill of some lurid revelation, will be sadly disappointed. Harriette was frank, but she was not morbid, and there is nothing in her narrative to provide a case for the psycho-analyst. The lady moralists of to-day, whose works lie so conspicuously on the best drawing-room tables, know far more about sex in all its infinite variety and its philosophical implications. Harriette was more interested in the people she met than in the physical details of her relationships with them, and although the present work was undoubtedly libellous when it was published, it was never pornographic, and its reissue need not keep the most watchful of our moral guardians awake at night.

Harriette was a simple soul, and except for being unable "to endure any mean between men of the highest fashion and honest tradesmen," she had few prejudices. She preserves, in all her relationships, a curious innocence, not of manners, but of thought, in contrast to so many moderns whose corruption is purely intellectual and imaginative, and who strive to find in literature those satisfactions which they dare not take from life. There is, indeed, nothing in Harriette's book to bring a blush to the cheek of innocence except the calmness with which she

takes her career for granted. Was she to be expected to waste her beauty and her talent on an apprentice watch-maker, when the society of a dozen lords was to be had for the asking? That she was not incapable of passion is proved by her violent affection for Lord Ponsonby, whose manly deportment, fine horse and large Newfoundland dog attracted her attention while walking in the Park. In her own phrase, "even the knocker of his door escaped not my veneration." She was frank with herself almost to the point of cynicism, and although, sometimes, she distorted facts to suit her own purposes, there is little doubt that the major portion of her narrative is substantially true. The main facts of her life both before and after the writing of her Memoirs may be briefly summarised.

Harriette Dubochet, better known as Harriette Wilson, was born on February 22nd, 1786, at 2, Carrington Street, Mayfair. Her father, John Dubochet, was a Swiss, apparently a clock-maker, and he kept one of those simple Mayfair shops which still exist cheek-by-jowl with their more luxurious neighbours. According to Harriette, her mother was the natural daughter of a country gentleman named Cheney, and Lady Frederick Campbell, aunt of the Duke of Argyle, was so struck by the girl's beauty that she brought her up as her own child. Even the influence of Lady Frederick, however, seems to have failed to secure for her protegée any better match than that which she was compelled to make, for it is hardly credible that the delicately nurtured girl would have elected, of her own free will, to become the wife of a Swiss tradesman twenty years her senior. However, marry him she did, and bore him fifteen children, several of whom obtained no small notoriety.

It was not a happy match. Indeed Harriette avers that her mother's marriage had proved so forcibly the miseries of two people of contrary opinions and character torturing each other to the end of their natural lives, that before she was ten years old she had decided to live free as air from any restraint but that of her own conscience.

Dubochet himself was proud, and somewhat disagreeable

His children (with a rigour less comprehensible now than it was then) were never allowed even to address him, and they were compelled to speak among themselves in whispers, for fear of driving out of his head one of the mathematical problems to which his whole leisure was devoted. We have Harriette's word for it that he was very handsome, with white teeth, expressive eyes and terrifying eyebrows. Self-absorbed in his favourite pursuit he little knew what formidable engines of destruction his taciturn fecundity was to launch upon the world. Indeed, to be poor, to live in Mayfair, to breed a large family of beautiful daughters, and to devote oneself to mathematics, is a combination of circumstances almost inevitably fatal to the peace of the British aristocracy.

Harriette's sister Amy was the first to abandon the path of virtue for that wider highway which led so temptingly to Brighton and beyond; and so far from terrifying her sisters by the awfulness of her fate, she found her new life so much more agreeable than the one which she had abandoned, that they all resolved to follow her example at the earliest possible opportunity.

Harriette was launched on her career of gallantry at the age of fifteen. Her first lover—if we may believe her story in a matter so near to her vanity—was Lord Craven. Her narrative begins somewhat abruptly, and it may have been, as her friend Julia Johnstone suggests,[1] that someone less noble was her seducer. But whether he was the first or not, he was followed by a distinguished procession of noblemen, including the Honourable Frederick Lamb, son of Lord Melbourne, and the Marquis of Lorne, afterwards ninth Duke of Argyle.

Her acquaintanceship with Julia began about the same time as her *affaire* with Argyle, that is to say, in the year of Trafalgar or thereabouts. She found her surrounded by all the *impedimenta* of refinement, in a room containing "a harp, drawings of a somewhat voluptuous sort, elegant needlework,

[1] See *Confessions of Julia Johnstone, written by Herself, in Contradiction to the Fables of Harriette Wilson*, 1825.

Moore's poems, and a fine pianoforte." Harriette seems to have found the languishing graces of Julia a pleasant contrast to her own high spirits, and Julia, on her part, was no doubt grateful to one who introduced an element of gaiety into her mood of habitual pensiveness. The two women were for a time inseparable, and when they were joined by Harriette's sister, Fanny, became famous in the London of the period as "the Three Graces".

Amy, already launched in London, seems to have regarded the advent of her two sisters with no very friendly eyes. She felt, no doubt, that her prestige was lowered by the presence in town of two such notorious relations, and she and Harriette (Fanny was too good-natured) exchanged many a sisterly scratch. However, they refrained from open war, and were seen much in one another's society.

Amy had a box at the opera, and "the Three Graces" had another. The London season, a hundred and twenty years ago, began much earlier than it does at present. But it was unfashionable to care for the opera for the first six weeks or so, and Harriette and Amy, following the usual custom, lent their boxes to their creditors, or their *femmes de chambre*, till about March or April. Then they shone forth as rival suns, each with her own circle of attendant planets.

Their satellites included some of the most fashionable and notable men of the day: Lord Alvanley, Lord Lowther, the Marquis of Hertford (then Lord Yarmouth), later to be immortalised by Thackeray as the Marquis of Steyne, John Wilson Croker, and the great Brummell himself, with his broken nose and elaborate cravats.

After the theatre they would all repair to Amy's, and eat a tray supper of cold chicken and other delicacies, "with plenty of champagne and claret". Amy, indeed, presided over a *salon de courtisane* where men of the very highest fashion congregated, secure in the knowledge that they would meet only ladies (of the highest fashion also, but) of the *demi-monde*. There were those who preferred such society to that of their own class, and they

were always welcome. Others who tried to compromise (Palmerston looked in one evening, coming from Lady Castlereagh's) were received more coldly.

Harriette's younger sister Sophia, who although scarcely thirteen years of age, had allowed herself to be seduced by Lord Deerhurst, was the hardest-headed member of the family. She had no great opinion of any of her sisters, and seems to have resolved at a very early age to follow their example only so far as might lead to fortune, or at least to a comfortable settlement. Deerhurst was soon abandoned for a more promising lover, in the person of Lord Berwick, and even with him the young lady was careful not to compromise herself too completely in the eyes of the world.

Lord Berwick took a comfortable house for her in Montagu Square, but the lady was still unsatisfied, and shortly afterwards he married her (on 8th February, 1812), and the happy pair settled down in the family mansion in Grosvenor Square. There Her Ladyship, the sole member of her family to bring her adventures to a triumphant conclusion, began to be conscious of her dignity, and with her husband's approval, to cut herself off from her former acquaintance. "I had always wished," laments Harriette, "to love my sisters dearly. It was very hard on me that they would not let me."

Amy was less fortunate, for she married, not a peer of the realm, but Robert Nicolas Charles Bochsa, a musician of somewhat irregular life. Fanny, whether by law or by courtesy, became Mrs. Parker, and owed what comfort she enjoyed in her closing days to the kindness of Lord Hertford. That irregular nobleman, who has become almost proverbial for dissolute behaviour, certainly emerged from his relations with the Dubochet family with considerable credit.

Perhaps it was not to be expected that Lady Berwick should recall with any satisfaction the events of her past life, but how did it come about that Harriette, and not Amy or Fanny, became the mouthpiece of the family fortunes? The facts are simple.

Lord Worcester, while still a minor, had become fascinated by her charms, and even for a time considered her as his future wife. His family, and in particular his father, the Duke of Beaufort, were naturally enough opposed to the match. The liaison, however, lasted three years, and Harriette only abandoned her prize in return for an annuity of £500. One of the conditions of this yearly payment was that she should live abroad, and this to Harriette, with her perfect knowledge of French and her still considerable personal attractions, was perhaps no great hardship. Unfortunately the Duke grew weary of the continual drain on his finances, and proposed to compound the promised income by a single payment of £1,200. This action, although it excited the unbounded indignation of Harriette, was of benefit to humanity, for it produced the Memoirs.

It was, therefore, no creative impulse that inspired the present book, nor even a Casanova-like desire to live over again the scenes of former triumphs. It was a very understandable wish to extract money from the public by a *chronique scandaleuse*, and from the Duke by blackmail.

She took up her residence in Paris, and seated in an easy chair, as she tells us, at No. 111, Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré, she wrote down the history of her life in a free, conversational style, which a hundred years has not robbed of its piquancy.

She had considerable qualifications for such a task. Her education, it is true, had been somewhat neglected. In her convent in France (if we can credit its existence outside Harriette's vivid imagination) she had read only sacred dramas. At home, the entire library consisted of Dubochet's mathematical books, *Buchan's Medicine*, *Gil Blas*, and the *Vicar of Wakefield*. If French and English literature were to be represented by only two volumes, perhaps no better two could have been chosen. But it is to be feared that Harriette was more responsive to the tolerant worldliness of Le Sage than to the delicate moral sensibility of Goldsmith. It was Fred Lamb who introduced her to a wider field, and read to her by the

hour from Shakespeare, Milton, Byron, Virgil and *The Rambler*. I wonder how many modern young men in similar circumstances would make so excellent a choice.

Harriette's love of literature seems to have been genuine enough. She even developed at one time a thirst for learning, and gravely informs her readers that she had studied Greek history for two whole days and Roman for six. That she had some literary gift is undeniable. If Fred Lamb's taste in such matters may be allowed a little weight, a comedy of hers showed merit, and although John Murray, the publisher, returned a work of hers without comment, she was far from being unable to express herself on paper. Events which had passed before her own eyes she could describe vividly enough, and there was little need of imagination after such a life as hers.

Her description of the journey to Oxford is excellent, and her power of seizing upon the characteristic utterances of her fellow passengers—in particular of the gentleman who says, "Sink the shop, and let's have a little genteel conversation" —foreshadows the method of Dickens. Her power of sarcastic phrase was considerable, as in her delicious description of Viscount Berwick driving down to Brighton in a coach and four, with Sophia following at a decent interval in a little chariot— "*parceque Mademoiselle Sophie voulait faire paraître les beaux restes de sa vertu chancelante.*"

Her rebuff by Murray had shattered her faith in fashionable publishers, and her manuscript found its way into the hands of one J. J. Stockdale, of No. 24, Opera Colonnade. Julia Johnstone, in her reply to Harriette, calls Stockdale "a hackneyed vendor in obscenity", and the nature of his shop's contents may be guessed from the titles of several other of his publications: *The Beauty, Marriage Ceremonies and Intercourse of the Sexes, in all Nations*; *The New Art of Love*, and *Dr. Robertson's Anatomy and Physiology*. If he also sold an ill-printed Boccaccio, an abbreviated Voltaire (with all the philosophy left out) and the Works of Aristotle with coloured plates, it would not be surprising. The immortal novels of

Paul de Kock had unfortunately not yet been written.

Thomas Little, who edited most of the wares at 24, Opera Colonnade, was probably Stockdale himself. He had the impudence in his postscript to Harriette's volumes to claim that "this publication cannot fail to produce the greatest moral effect on the present and future generations. (For) if

> Vice is a monster, of such hideous mien
> That, to be hated, needs but to be seen,

when has vice ever been so unsparingly exposed?"

Unfortunately the authoress was quite unable to rise to the heights of such Apocalyptic fervour, and made no secret throughout her narrative of having, on the whole, enjoyed herself very much. It is pleasant to think that the lapse of a hundred years has elevated the book to the level of an historical document, and made such humbug for ever unnecessary.

The work appeared in 1825, and was instantly a success. Harriette had hoped for twenty editions. Stockdale sold thirty within the year; and a French version in six volumes carried the notoriety of the authoress to her new place of residence. The happy publisher was compelled to erect a barricade in front of his premises to prevent the public from storming the shop. He was, however, not without his troubles. Frederick Lamb called to threaten prosecution, and two of Harriette's victims did prosecute, and involved Stockdale in considerable expense. But as he and the authoress between them fingered, as Julia puts it, £10,000 of the public money, they had little reason to complain.

The fashionable world was in great agitation, especially as further instalments of the damaging record were threatened. Meetings were held at White's, Brookes' and the United Service clubs in order to decide what could be done. It is probable that the action brought by Blore, the stone-mason of Piccadilly, was financed from these aristocratic institutions, as a kind of *ballon d'essai*. Harriette had held the unfortunate Blore up to ridicule for the boorishness of his alleged advances, and the

stone-mason, now married and father of a family, claimed damages. In spite of the eloquence of Stockdale he won his case, and was awarded £300. Another plaintiff, one Hugh Evans Fisher, received even more, but although both actions were successful, Harriette's former wealthy admirers decided that it would be safer to go no further. They seem to have bought her silence, and Harriette troubled them no more.

Her life in Paris was not disagreeable. She had had, since her emigration about 1820, a considerable amount of good society. She was allowed to send her letters (a startling commentary this!) in the Foreign Office bag, and no less a person than Henry Brougham, M.P., took her to see the great Talma in "Racine". She even claims to have written to Byron in Ravenna, and to have received from him £50. But all this was probably before she threw her bombshell into the midst of the polite world.

With the earnings of the book she had written, and the probably greater earnings of the one she had refrained from writing, she settled down and married a M. Rochfort who, it may be feared, belonged essentially to that middle class in society which Harriette so cordially despised. She returned to England a pious widow, and died in 1846, in a world which had already felt the salutary moral influence of the young Queen.

The world which she herself represented was already dead. Those who find an exquisite pleasure in the flavour of an epoch, cannot do better, in order to appreciate the period in which Harriette flourished, than study the coloured etchings of the Dightons, especially of Richard Dighton. In the pages of his *Characters, at the West End of the Town*, published in the same year as Harriette's Memoirs, they may gaze upon the stout figure of Argyle, with side-whiskers, blue frock coat, white trousers, yellow gloves and low-browed cylindrical hat, or note the peculiar collar of Sefton, or the sporting cut-away of Nugent. Or they may look with reverence upon the bodily form of Lord Alvanley, "going to White's", or watch the Marquis of Worcester, with his white poodle, strolling in the

Park, or behold the redoubtable Marquis of Hertford himself, with his double chin, sensual mouth and gait of the conqueror.

It was a full-blooded age, boisterous and philistine. The barbarous male had escaped from the salon and had not yet been imprisoned in the drawing-room. The light lady of the period had lost the literary pretensions of the eighteenth century and not yet acquired the hypocrisy of the nineteenth. But the Victorian age was not to be long delayed. Harriette's high-spirited type went out of fashion, and Julia Johnstone came into her own.

JAMES LAVER.

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(Reprinted in full from the original edition)

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OF HERSELF AND OTHERS

CHAPTER I

I SHALL not say why and how I became, at the age of fifteen, the mistress of the Earl of Craven. Whether it was love, or the severity of my father, the depravity of my own heart, or the winning arts of the noble Lord, which induced me to leave my paternal roof and place myself under his protection, does not now much signify: or if it does, I am not in the humour to gratify curiosity in this matter.

I resided on the Marine Parade, at Brighton; and I remember that Lord Craven used to draw cocoa trees, and his fellows, as he called them, on the best vellum paper, for my amusement. Here stood the enemy, he would say; and here, my love, are my fellows: there the cocoa trees, etc. It was, in fact, a dead bore. All these cocoa trees and fellows, at past eleven o'clock at night, could have no peculiar interest for a child like myself, so lately in the habit of retiring early to rest. One night, I recollect, I fell asleep; and, as I often dream, I said, yawning, and half awake, Oh, Lord! oh, Lord! Craven has got me into the West Indies again. In short, I soon found that I had made but a

bad speculation by going from my father to Lord Craven. I was even more afraid of the latter than I had been of the former; not that there was any particular harm in the man, beyond his cocoa trees; but we never suited nor understood each other.

I was not depraved enough to determine immediately on a new choice, and yet I often thought about it. How, indeed, could I do otherwise, when the Honourable Frederick Lamb was my constant visitor, and talked to me of nothing else? However, in justice to myself, I must declare that the idea of the possibility of deceiving Lord Craven, while I was under his roof, never once entered into my head. Frederick was then very handsome; and certainly tried, with all his soul and with all his strength, to convince me that constancy to Lord Craven was the greatest nonsense in the world. I firmly believe that Frederick Lamb sincerely loved me, and deeply regretted that he had no fortune to invite me to share with him.

Lord Melbourne, his father, was a good man. Not one of your stiff-laced moralizing fathers, who preach chastity and forbearance to their children. Quite the contrary; he congratulated his son on the lucky circumstance of his friend Craven having such a fine girl with him. "No such thing," answered Frederick Lamb; "I am unsuccessful there. Harriette will have nothing to do with me."—"Nonsense!" rejoined Melbourne, in great surprise; "I never heard anything half so ridiculous in all my life. The girl must be mad! She looks mad: I thought so the other day, when I met her galloping about, with her feathers blowing and her thick dark hair about her ears."

"I'll speak to Harriette for you," added His Lordship, after a long pause; and then continued repeating to himself, in an undertone, "Not have my son, indeed! six feet high! a fine, straight, handsome, noble young fellow! I wonder what she would have!"

In truth, I scarcely knew myself; but something I determined on: so miserably tired was I of Craven, and his cocoa trees, and his sailing boats, and his ugly cotton nightcap. Surely, I would

say, all men do not wear those shocking cotton nightcaps; else all women's illusions had been destroyed on the first night of their marriage!

I wonder, thought I, what sort of a nightcap the Prince of Wales wears? Then I went on to wonder whether the Prince of Wales would think me so beautiful as Frederick Lamb did? Next I reflected that Frederick Lamb was younger than the Prince; but then, again, a Prince of Wales! ! !

I was undecided: my heart began to soften. I thought of my dear mother, and wished I had never left her. It was too late, however, now. My father would not suffer me to return; and as to passing my life, or any more of it, with Craven, cotton nightcap and all, it was death! He never once made me laugh, nor said nor did anything to please me.

Thus musing, I listlessly turned over my writing-book, half in the humour to address the Prince of Wales. A sheet of paper, covered with Lord Craven's cocoa trees, decided me; and I wrote the following letter, which I addressed to the Prince.

BRIGHTON.

I am told that I am very beautiful, so, perhaps, you would like to see me; and I wish that, since so many are disposed to love me, one, for in the humility of my heart I should be quite satisfied with one, would be at the pains to make me love him. In the mean time, this is all very dull work, Sir, and worse even than being at home with my father: so, if you pity me, and believe you could make me in love with you, write to me, and direct to the post-office here.

By return of post, I received an answer nearly to this effect: I believe, from Colonel Thomas.

Miss Wilson's letter has been received by the noble individual to whom it was addressed. If Miss Wilson will come to town, she may have an interview, by directing her letter as before.

I answered this note directly, addressing my letter to the Prince of Wales.

SIR,

To travel fifty-two miles, this bad weather, merely to see a man, with only the given number of legs, arms, fingers, etc., would, you must admit, be madness, in a girl like myself, surrounded by humble admirers, who are ever ready to travel any distance for the honour of kissing the tip of her little finger; but if you can prove to me that you are one bit better than any man who may be ready to attend my bidding, I'll e'en start for London directly. So, if you can do anything better, in the way of pleasing a lady, than ordinary men, write directly: if not, adieu, Monsieur le Prince.

I won't say Yours,
By day or night, or any kind of light;
Because you are too impudent.

It was necessary to put this letter into the post-office myself, as Lord Craven's black footman would have been somewhat surprised at its address. Crossing the Steyne, I met Lord Melbourne, who joined me immediately.

"Where is Craven?" said His Lordship, shaking hands with me.

"Attending to his military duties at Lewes, my Lord."

'And where's my son Fred?" asked His Lordship.

"I am not your son's keeper, my Lord," said I.

"No! By the bye," inquired His Lordship, "how is this? I wanted to call upon you about it. I never heard of such a thing, in the whole course of my life! What the Devil can you possibly have to say against my son Fred?"

"Good heavens! my Lord, you frighten me! I never recollect to have said a single word against your son, as long as I have lived. Why should I?"

"Why, indeed!" said Lord Melbourne. "And since there is nothing to be said against him, what excuse can you make for using him so ill?"

' I don't understand you one bit, my Lord." (The very idea of a father put me in a tremble.)

"Why," said Lord Melbourne, "did you not turn the poor boy out of your house, as soon as it was dark; although Craven

was in town, and there was not the shadow of an excuse for such treatment?"

At this moment, and before I could recover from my surprise at the tenderness of some parents, Frederick Lamb, who was almost my shadow, joined us.

"Fred, my boy," said Lord Melbourne, "I'll leave you two together; and I fancy you'll find Miss Wilson more reasonable." He touched his hat to me, as he entered the little gate of the Pavilion, where we had remained stationary from the moment His Lordship had accosted me.

Frederick Lamb laughed long, loud, and heartily at his father's interference. So did I, the moment he was safely out of sight; and then I told him of my answer to the Prince's letter, at which he laughed still more. He was charmed with me for refusing His Royal Highness. "Not," said Frederick, "that he is not as handsome and graceful a man as any in England; but I hate the weakness of a woman who knows not how to refuse a prince, merely because he is a prince."—"It is something, too, to be of royal blood," answered I frankly; "and something more to be so accomplished: but this posting after a man! I wonder what he could mean by it! !"

Frederick Lamb now began to plead his own cause. "I must soon join my regiment in Yorkshire," said he (he was, at that time, aide-de-camp to General Mackenzie); "God knows when we may meet again! I am sure you will not long continue with Lord Craven. I foresee what will happen, and yet, when it does, I think I shall go mad!"

For my part, I felt flattered and obliged by the affection Frederick Lamb evinced towards me; but I was still not in love with him.

At length the time arrived when poor Frederick Lamb could delay his departure from Brighton no longer. On the eve of it, he begged to be allowed to introduce his brother William to me.

"What for?" said I.

"That he may let me know how you behave," answered Frederick Lamb.

"And if I fall in love with him?" I inquired.

"I am sure you won't," replied Fred. "Not because my brother William is not likeable; on the contrary, William is much handsomer than I am; but he will not love you as I have done, and do still; and you are too good to forget me entirely."

Our parting scene was rather tender. For the last ten days, Lord Craven being absent, we had scarcely been separated an hour during the whole day. I had begun to feel the force of habit; and Frederick Lamb really respected me, for the perseverance with which I had resisted his urgent wishes, when he would have had me deceive Lord Craven. He had ceased to torment me with such wild fits of passion as had, at first, frightened me; and by these means he had obtained much more of my confidence.

Two days after his departure for Hull, in Yorkshire, Lord Craven returned to Brighton, where he was immediately informed, by some spiteful enemy of mine, that I had been, during the whole of his absence, openly intriguing with Frederick Lamb. In consequence of this information, one evening, when I expected his return, his servant brought me the following letter, dated Lewes:

A friend of mine has informed me of what has been going on at Brighton. This information, added to what I have seen with my own eyes, of your intimacy with Frederic Lamb, obliges me to declare that we must separate. Let me add, Harriette, that you might have done anything with me, with only a little more conduct. As it is, allow me to wish you happy; and further, pray inform me, if, in any way, à la distance, *I can promote your welfare.*

CRAVEN.

This letter completed my dislike of Lord Craven. I answered it immediately, as follows:

MY LORD,

Had I ever wished to deceive you, I have the wit to have done it successfully; but you are old enough to be a better judge of human

nature than to have suspected me of guile or deception. In the plenitude of your condescension, you are pleased to add, that I "might have done anything with you, with only a little more conduct," now I say, and from my heart, the Lord defend me from ever doing any thing with you again! Adieu.

HARRIETTE.

My present situation was rather melancholy and embarrassing, and yet I felt my heart the lighter for my release from the cocoa trees, without its being my own act and deed. It is my fate! thought I; for I never wronged this man. I hate his fine carriage, and his money, and everything belonging to, or connected with him. I shall hate cocoa as long as I live; and, I am sure, I will never enter a boat again, if I can help it. This is what one gets by acting with principle.

The next morning, while I was considering what was to become of me, I received a very affectionate letter from Frederick Lamb, dated Hull. He dared not, he said, be selfish enough to ask me to share his poverty, and yet he had a kind of presentiment, that he should not lose me.

My case was desperate; for I had taken a vow not to remain another night under Lord Craven's roof. John, therefore, the black, whom Craven had, I suppose, imported, with his cocoa trees from the West Indies, was desired to secure me a place in the mail for Hull.

It is impossible to do justice to the joy and rapture which brightened Frederick's countenance, when he flew to receive me, and conducted me to his house, where I was shortly visited by his worthy general, Mackenzie, who assured me of his earnest desire to make my stay in Hull as comfortable as possible.

We continued here for about three months, and then came to London. Fred Lamb's passion increased daily; but I discovered, on our arrival in London, that he was a voluptuary, somewhat worldly and selfish. My comforts were not considered. I lived in extreme poverty, while he contrived to enjoy all the luxuries of life; and suffered me to pass my dreary even

ings alone, while he frequented balls, masquerades, etc. Secure of my constancy, he was satisfied—so was not I! I felt that I deserved better from him.

I asked Frederick, one day, if the Marquis of Lorne was as handsome as he had been represented to me. "The finest fellow on earth," said Frederick Lamb, "all the women adore him"; and then he went on to relate various anecdotes of His Lordship, which strongly excited my curiosity.

Soon after this, he quitted town for a few weeks, and I was left alone in London, without money, or, at any rate, with very little; and Frederick Lamb, who had intruded himself on me at Brighton, and thus become the cause of my separation from Lord Craven, made himself happy; because he believed me faithful, and cared not for my distresses.

This idea disgusted me; and, in a fit of anger, I wrote to the Marquis of Lorne, merely to say that, if he would walk up to Duke's Row, Somerstown, he would meet a most lovely girl.

This was his answer:

If you are but half as lovely as you think yourself, you must be well worth knowing; but how is that to be managed? not in the street! But come to No. 39, Portland-street, and ask for me.

L.

My reply was this:

No! our first meeting must be on the high road, in order that I may have room to run away, in case I don't like you.

HARRIETTE.

The Marquis rejoined:

Well, then, fair lady, to-morrow, at four, near the turnpike, look for me on horseback, and then, you know, I can gallop away.

L.

We met. The Duke (he has since succeeded to the title) did not gallop away; and, for my part, I had never seen a countenance I had thought half so beautifully expressive. I was afraid to look at it, lest a closer examination might destroy all the new

and delightful sensations his first glance had inspired in my breast. His manner was most gracefully soft and polished. We walked together for about two hours.

"I never saw such a sunny, happy countenance as yours in my whole life," said Argyle to me.

"Oh, but I am happier than usual to-day," answered I, very naturally.

Before we parted, the Duke knew as much of me and my adventures as I knew myself. He was very anxious to be allowed to call on me.

"And how will your particular friend, Frederick Lamb, like that?" inquired I.

The Duke laughed.

"Well, then," said His Grace, "do me the honour, some day, to come and dine or sup with me at Argyle House."

"I shall not be able to run away, if I go there," I answered, laughingly, in allusion to my last note.

"Shall you want to run away from me?" said Argyle; and there was something unusually beautiful and eloquent in his countenance, which brought a deep blush into my cheek.

"When we know each other better?" added Argyle, beseechingly. "*En attendant*, will you walk again with me to-morrow?" I assented, and we parted.

I returned to my home in unusual spirits; they were a little damped, however, by the reflection that I had been doing wrong. I cannot, I reasoned with myself, I cannot, I fear, become what the world calls a steady, prudent, virtuous woman. That time is past, even if I was ever fit for it. Still I must distinguish myself from those in the like unfortunate situations, by strict probity and love of truth. I will never become vile. I will always adhere to good faith, as long as anything like kindness or honourable principle is shown towards me; and, when I am ill-used, I will leave my lover rather than deceive him. Frederick Lamb relies in perfect confidence on my honour. True, that confidence is the effect of vanity. He believes that a woman who could resist him, as I did at Brighton, is the safest

woman on earth! He leaves me alone, and without sufficient money for common necessaries. No matter, I must tell him to-night, as soon as he arrives from the country, that I have written to, and walked with Lorne. My dear mother would never forgive me, if I became artful.

So mused, and thus reasoned I, till I was interrupted by Frederick Lamb's loud knock at my door. He will be in a fine passion, said I to myself, in excessive trepidation; and I was in such a hurry to have it over, that I related all immediately. To my equal joy and astonishment, Frederick Lamb was not a bit angry. From his manner, I could not help guessing that his friend Lorne had often been found a very powerful rival.

I could see through the delight he experienced, at the idea of possessing a woman whom, his vanity persuaded him, Argyle would sigh for in vain; and, attacking me on my weak point, he kissed me, and said, "I have the most perfect esteem for my dearest little wife, whom I can, I know, as safely trust with Argyle as Craven trusted her with me."

"Are you quite sure?" asked I, merely to ease my conscience. "Were it not wiser to advise me not to walk about with him?"

"No, no," said Frederick Lamb; "it is such good fun! bring him up every day to Somerstown and the Jew's Harp House, there to swallow cyder and sentiment. Make him walk up here as many times as you can, dear little Harry, for the honour of your sex, and to punish him for declaring, as he always does, that no woman who will not love him at once is worth his pursuit."

"I am sorry he is such a coxcomb," said I.

"What is that to you, you little fool?"

"True," I replied. And, at that moment, I made a sort of determination not to let the beautiful and voluptuous expression of Argyle's dark blue eyes take possession of my fancy.

"You are a neater figure than the Marquis of Lorne;" said I to Frederick, wishing to think so.

"Lorne is growing fat," answered Frederick Lamb; "but he is the most active creature possible, and appears lighter than

any man of his weight I ever saw; and then he is, without any exception, the highest-bred man in England."

"And you desire and permit me to walk about the country with him?"

"Yes; do trot him often up here. I want to have a laugh against Lorne."

"And you are not jealous?"

"Not at all," said Frederick Lamb, "for I am secure of your affections."

I must not deceive this man, thought I, and the idea began to make me a little melancholy. My only chance, or rather my only excuse, will be his leaving me without the means of existence. This appeared likely; for I was too shy and too proud to ask for money; and Frederick Lamb encouraged me in this amiable forbearance!

The next morning, with my heart beating very unusually high, I attended my appointment with Argyle. I hoped, nay, almost expected, to find him there before me. I paraded near the turnpike five minutes, then grew angry; in five more, I became wretched; in five more, downright indignant; and, in five more, wretched again—and so I returned home.

This, thought I, shall be a lesson to me hereafter, never to meet a man: it is unnatural; and yet I had felt it perfectly natural to return to the person whose society had made me so happy! No matter, reasoned I, we females must not suffer love or pleasure to glow in our eyes until we are quite sure of a return. We must be dignified! Alas! I can only be and seem what I am. No doubt my sunny face of joy and happiness, which he talked to me about, was understood, and it has disgusted him. He thought me bold, and yet I am sure I never blushed so much in any man's society before.

I now began to consider myself with feelings of the most painful humility. Suddenly I flew to my writing-desk; he shall not have the cut all on his side neither, thought I, with the pride of a child. I will soon convince him I am not accustomed to be slighted; and then I wrote to His Grace, as follows:

It was very wrong and very bold of me, to have sought your acquaintance, in the way I did, my Lord; and I entreat you to forgive and forget my childish folly, as completely as I have forgotten the occasion of it.

So far, so good, thought I, pausing; but then suppose he should, from this dry note, really believe me so cold and stupid as not to have felt his pleasing qualities? Suppose now it were possible that he liked me after all? Then hastily, and half ashamed of myself, I added these few lines:

I have not quite deserved this contempt from you, and, in that consolatory reflection, I take my leave—not in anger, my Lord, but only with the steady determination so to profit by the humiliating lesson you have given me, as never to expose myself to the like contempt again.

Your most obedient servant,

HARRIETTE WILSON.

Having put my letter into the post, I passed a restless night; and, the next morning, heard the knock of the twopenny postman, in extreme agitation. He brought me, as I suspected, an answer from Argyle, which is subjoined.

You are not half vain enough, dear Harriette. You ought to have been quite certain that any man who had once met you, could fail in a second appointment, but from unavoidable accident—and, if you were only half as pleased with Thursday morning as I was, you will meet me to-morrow, in the same place, at four. Pray, pray, come.

LORNE.

I kissed the letter, and put it into my bosom, grateful for the weight it had taken off my heart. Not that I was so far gone in love, as my readers may imagine, but I had suffered severely from wounded pride, and, in fact, I was very much *tête montée*.

The sensations which Argyle had inspired me with, were the warmest, nay, the first of the same nature I had ever experienced. Nevertheless, I could not forgive him quite so easily as this, neither. I recollected what Frederick Lamb had said

about his vanity. No doubt, thought I, he thinks it was nothing to have paraded me up and down that stupid turnpike road, in the vain hope of seeing him. It shall now be his turn: and I gloried in the idea of revenge.

The hour of Argyle's appointment drew nigh, arrived, and passed away, without my leaving my house. To Frederick Lamb I related everything—presented him with Argyle's letter, and acquainted him with my determination not to meet His Grace.

"How good!" said Frederick Lamb, quite delighted. "We dine together to-day, at Lady Holland's; and I mean to ask him, before everybody at table, what he thinks of the air about the turnpike in Somerstown."

The next day I was surprised by a letter, not, as I anticipated, from Argyle, but from the late Tom Sheridan, only son of Richard Brinsley Sheridan. I had, by mere accident, become acquainted with that very interesting young man, when quite a child, from the circumstance of his having paid great attention to one of my elder sisters.

He requested me to allow him to speak a few words to me, wherever I pleased. Frederick Lamb having gone to Brocket Hall, in Hertfordshire, I desired him to call on me.

"I am come from my friend Lorne," said Tom Sheridan. "I would not have intruded on you, but that, poor fellow, he is really annoyed; and he has commissioned me to acquaint you with the accident which obliged him to break his appointment, because I can best vouch for the truth of it, having, upon my honour, heard the Prince of Wales invite Lord Lorne to Carlton House, with my own ears, at the very moment when he was about to meet you in Somerstown. Lorne," continued Tom Sheridan, "desires me to say, that he is not coxcomb enough to imagine you cared for him; but, in justice, he wants to stand exactly where he did in your opinion, before he broke his appointment: he was so perfectly innocent on that subject. I would write to her, said he, again and again; but that, in all probability, my letters would be shown to Frederick Lamb, and

be laughed at by them both. I would call on her, in spite of the devil, but that I know not where she lives.

"I asked Argyle," Tom Sheridan proceeded, "how he had addressed his last letters to you? To the post-office, in Somerstown, was his answer, and thence they were forwarded to Harriette. He had tried to bribe the old woman there, to obtain my address, but she abused him, and turned him out of her shop. It is very hard," continued Tom, repeating the words of his noble friend, "to lose the goodwill of one of the nicest, cleverest girls I ever met with in my life, who was, I am certain, civilly, if not kindly disposed towards me, by such a mere accident. Therefore," continued Tom Sheridan, smiling, "you'll make it up with Lorne, won't you?"

"There is nothing to forgive," said I, "if no slight was meant. In short, you are making too much of me, and spoiling me, by all this explanation; for, indeed, I had, at first, been less indignant; but that I fancied His Grace neglected me, because——" and I hesitated, while I could feel myself blush deeply.

"Because what?" asked Tom Sheridan.

"Nothing," I replied, looking at my shoes.

"What a pretty girl you are," observed Sheridan, "particularly when you blush."

"Fiddlestick!" said I, laughing; "you know you always preferred my sister Fanny."

"Well," replied Tom, "there I plead guilty. Fanny is the sweetest creature on earth; but you are all a race of finished coquettes, who delight in making fools of people. Now can anything come up to your vanity in writing to Lorne, that you are the most beautiful creature on earth?"

"Never mind," said I, "you set all that to rights. I was never vain in your society, in my life."

"I would give the world for a kiss at this moment," said Tom; "because you look so humble, and so amiable; but"—recollecting himself—"this is not exactly the embassy I came upon. Have you a mind to give Lorne an agreeable surprise?"

"I don't know."

"Upon my honour I believe he is downright in love with you."

"Well?"

"Come into a hackney-coach with me, and we will drive down to the Tennis Court, in the Haymarket."

"Is the Duke there?"

"Yes."

"But—at all events, I will not trust myself in a hackney-coach with you."

"There was a time," said poor Tom Sheridan, with much drollery of expression," there was a time when the very motion of a carriage would——but now!"—and he shook his handsome head with comic gravity—"but now! you may drive with me, from here to St. Paul's, in the most perfect safety. I will tell you a secret," added he, and he fixed his fine dark eye on my face while he spoke, in a tone, half merry, half desponding, "I am dying; but nobody knows it yet!"

I was very much affected by his manner of saying this.

"My dear Mr. Sheridan," said I, with earnest warmth, "you have accused me of being vain of the little beauty God has given me. Now I would give it all, or, upon my word, I think I would, to obtain the certainty that you would, from this hour, refrain from such excesses as are destroying you."

"Did you see me play the methodist parson, in a tub, at Mrs. Beaumont's masquerade, last Thursday?" said Tom, with affected levity.

"You may laugh as you please," said I, "at a little fool like me pretending to preach to you; yet I am sensible enough to admire you, and quite feeling enough to regret your time so misspent, your brilliant talents so misapplied."

"Bravo! Bravo!" Tom reiterated, "what a funny little girl you are! Pray, Miss, how is your time spent?"

"Not in drinking brandy," I replied.

"And how might your talent be applied, Ma'am?"

"Have not I just given you a specimen, in the shape of a handsome quotation?"

"My good little girl—it is in the blood, and I can't help it,—and, if I could, it is too late now. I'm dying, I tell you. I know not if my poor father's physician was as eloquent as you are; but he did his best to turn him from drinking. Among other things, he declared to him one day, that the brandy, Arquebusade, and Eau de Cologne he swallowed, would burn off the coat of his stomach. Then, said my father, my stomach must digest in its waistcoat; for I cannot help it."

"Indeed, I am very sorry for you," I replied; and I hope he believed me; for he pressed my hand hastily, and I think I saw a tear glisten in his bright, dark eye.

"Shall I tell Lorne," said poor Tom, with an effort to recover his usual gaiety, "that you will write to him, or will you come to the Tennis Court?"

"Neither," answered I; "but you may tell His Lordship that, of course, I am not angry, since I am led to believe he had no intention to humble nor make a fool of me."

"Nothing more?" inquired Tom.

"Nothing," I replied, "for His Lordship."

"And what for me?" said Tom.

"You! what do you want?"

"A kiss!" he said.

"Not I, indeed!"

"Be it so, then; and yet you and I may never meet again on this earth, and just now I thought you felt some interest about me"; and he was going away.

"So I do, dear Tom Sheridan!" said I, detaining him; for I saw death had fixed his stamp on poor Sheridan's handsome face. "You know I have a very warm and feeling heart, and taste enough to admire and like you; but why is this to be our last meeting?"

"I must go to the Mediterranean;" poor Sheridan continued, putting his hand to his chest, and coughing.

To die! thought I, as I looked on his sunk, but still very expressive dark eyes.

"Then God bless you!" said I, first kissing his hand, and then,

though somewhat timidly, leaning my face towards him. He parted my hair, and kissed my forehead, my eyes, and my lips.

"If I do come back," said he, forcing a languid smile, "mind let me find you married, and rich enough to lend me an occasional hundred pounds or two." He then kissed his hand gracefully, and was out of sight in an instant.

I never saw him again.

The next morning my maid brought me a little note from Argyle, to say that he had been waiting about my door an hour, having learned my address from poor Sheridan; and that, seeing the servant in the street, he could not help making an attempt to induce me to go out and walk with him. I looked out of window, saw Argyle, ran for my hat and cloak, and joined him in an instant.

"Am I forgiven?" said Argyle, with gentle eagerness.

"Oh yes," returned I, "long ago; but that will do you no good, for I really am treating Frederick Lamb very ill, and therefore must not walk with you again."

"Why not?" Argyle inquired. "*Apropos*," he added, "you told Frederick that I walked about the turnpike looking for you, and that, no doubt, to make him laugh at me?"

"No, not for that; but I never could deceive any man. I have told him the whole story of our becoming acquainted, and he allows me to walk with you. It is I who think it wrong, not Frederick."

"That is to say, you think me a bore," said Argyle, reddening with pique and disappointment.

"And suppose I loved you?" I asked, "still I am engaged to Frederick Lamb, who trusts me, and——"

"If," interrupted Argyle, "it were possible you did love me, Frederick Lamb would be forgotten: but, though you did not love me, you must promise to try and do so, some day or other. You don't know how much I have fixed my heart on it."

These sentimental walks continued more than a month. One evening we walked rather later than usual. It grew dark. In a moment of ungovernable passion, Argyle's ardour frightened

me. Not that I was insensible to it: so much the contrary, that I felt certain another meeting must decide my fate. Still, I was offended at what, I conceived, shewed such a want of respect. The Duke became humble. There is a charm in the humility of a lover who has offended. The charm is so great that we like to prolong it. In spite of all he could say, I left him in anger. The next morning I received the following note:

If you see me waiting about your door, to-morrow morning, do you not fancy I am looking for you; but for your pretty housemaid.

I did see him from a sly corner of my window; but I resisted all my desires, and remained concealed. I dare not see him again, thought I, for I cannot be so very profligate, knowing and feeling, as I do, how impossible it will be to refuse him anything, if we meet again. I cannot treat Fred Lamb in that manner! besides, I should be afraid to tell him of it: he would, perhaps, kill me.

But then, poor dear Lorne! to return his kisses, as I did last night, and afterwards be so very severe on him, for a passion which it seemed so out of his power to control!

Nevertheless we must part, now or never; so I'll write and take my leave of him kindly. This was my letter:

At the first, I was afraid I should love you, and, but for Fred Lamb having requested me to get you up to Somerstown, after I had declined meeting you, I had been happy: now the idea makes me miserable. Still it must be so. I am naturally affectionate. Habit attaches me to Fred Lamb. I cannot deceive him or acquaint him with what will cause him to cut me, in anger and for ever. We may not then meet again, Lorne, as hitherto: for now we could not be merely friends: lovers we must be, hereafter, or nothing. I have never loved any man in my life before, and yet, dear Lorne, you see we must part. I venture to send you the inclosed thick lock of my hair; because you have been good enough to admire it. I do not care how I have disfigured my head, since you are not to see it again.

God bless you, Lorne. Do not quite forget last night directly, and believe me, as in truth I am,

Most devotedly yours,
HARRIETTE.

This was his answer, written, I suppose, in some pique.

True, you have given me many sweet kisses, and a lock of your beautiful hair. All this does not convince me you are one bit in love with me. I am the last man on earth to desire you to do violence to your feelings, by leaving a man as dear to you as Frederick Lamb is; so farewell, Harriette. I shall not intrude to offend you again.

LORNE.

Poor Lorne is unhappy; and, what is worse, thought I, he will soon hate me. The idea made me wretched. However, I will do myself the justice to say, that I have seldom, in the whole course of my life, been tempted by my passions or my fancies, to what my heart and conscience told me was wrong. I am afraid my conscience has been a very easy one; but, certainly, I have followed its dictates. There was a want of heart and delicacy, I always thought, in leaving any man, without full and very sufficient reasons for it. At the same time, my dear mother's marriage had proved to me so forcibly, the miseries of two people of contrary opinions and character, torturing each other to the end of their natural lives, that, before I was ten years old, I decided, in my own mind, to live free as air from any restraint but that of my conscience.

Frederick Lamb's love was now increasing, as all men's do, from gratified vanity. He sometimes passed an hour in reading to me. Till then, I had no idea of the gratification to be derived from books. In my convent in France, I had read only sacred Dramas; at home, my father's mathematical books, *Buchan's Medicine*, *Gil Blas*, and the *Vicar of Wakefield*, formed our whole library. The two latter I had long known by heart, and could repeat at this moment.

My sisters used to subscribe to little circulating libraries, in the

neighbourhood, for the common novels of the day; but I always hated these. Fred Lamb's choice was happy—Milton, Shakespeare, Byron, the Rambler, Virgil, etc. I must know all about these Greeks and Romans, said I to myself. Some day I will go into the country quite alone, and study like mad. I am too young now.

In the meantime, I was absolutely charmed with Shakespeare. Music, I always had a natural talent for. I played well on the pianoforte; that is, with taste and execution, though almost without study.

There was a very elegant-looking woman, residing in my neighbourhood, in a beautiful little cottage, who had long excited my curiosity. She appeared to be the mother of five extremely beautiful children. These were always to be seen with their nurse, walking out, most fancifully dressed. Every one used to stop to admire them. Their mother seemed to live in the most complete retirement. I never saw her with anybody besides her children.

One day our eyes met: she smiled, and I half bowed. The next day we met again, and the lady wished me a good morning. We soon got into conversation. I asked her, if she did not lead a very solitary life? "You are the first female I have spoken to for four years," said the lady, "with the exception of my own servants; but," added she, "some day we may know each other better. In the meantime will you trust yourself to come and dine with me to-day?"—"With great pleasure," I replied, "if you think me worthy that honour." We then separated to dress for dinner.

When I entered her drawing-room, at the hour she had appointed, I was struck with the elegant taste, more than with the richness of the furniture. A beautiful harp, drawings of a somewhat voluptuous cast, elegant needlework, Moore's poems, and a fine pianoforte, formed a part of it. She is not a bad woman—and she is not a good woman, said I to myself. What can she be?

The lady now entered the room, and welcomed me with an

appearance of real pleasure. "I am not quite sure," said she, "whether I can have the pleasure of introducing you to Mr. Johnstone to-day, or not. We will not wait dinner for him, if he does not arrive in time." This was the first word I had heard about a Mr. Johnstone, although I knew the lady was called by that name.

Just as we were sitting down to dinner, Mr. Johnstone arrived, and was introduced to me. He was a particularly elegant handsome man, about forty years of age. His manner of addressing Mrs. Johnstone was more that of an humble romantic lover than of a husband; yet Julia, for so he called her, could be no common woman. I could not endure all this mystery, and, when he left us in the evening, I frankly asked Julia, for so we will call her in future, why she invited a strange madcap girl like me to dinner with her?

"Consider the melancholy life I lead," said Julia.

"Thank you for the compliment," answered I.

"But do you believe," interrupted Julia, "that I should have asked you to dine with me, if I had not been particularly struck and pleased with you? I had, as I passed your window, heard you touch the pianoforte with a very masterly hand, and therefore I conceived that you were not uneducated, and I knew that you led almost as retired a life as myself. *Au reste*," continued Julia, "some day, perhaps soon, you shall know all about me."

I did not press the matter further at that moment, believing it would be indelicate.

"Shall we go to the nursery?" asked Julia.

I was delighted; and, romping with her lovely children, dressing their dolls, and teaching them to skip, I forgot my love for Argyle, as much as if that excellent man had never been born.

Indeed I am not quite sure that it would have occurred to me even when I went home, but that Fred Lamb, who was just at this period showing Argyle up all over the town as my amorous shepherd, had a new story to relate of His Grace.

Horace Beckford and two other fashionable men, who had

heard from Frederick of my cruelty, as he termed it, and the Duke's daily romantic walks to the Jew's Harp House, had come upon him, by accident, in a body, as they were galloping through Somerstown. Lorne was sitting, in a very pastoral fashion, on a gate near my door, whistling. They saluted him with a loud laugh. No man could, generally speaking, parry a joke better than Argyle: for few knew the world better: but this was no joke. He had been severely wounded and annoyed by my cutting his acquaintance altogether, at the very moment when he had reason to believe that the passion he really felt for me was returned. It was almost the first instance of the kind he had ever met with. He was bored and vexed with himself, for the time he had lost, and yet he found himself continually in my neighbourhood, almost before he was aware of it. He wanted, as he has told me since, to meet me once more by accident, and then he declared he would give me up.

"What a set of consummate asses you are," said Argyle to Beckford and his party; and then quietly continued on the gate, whistling as before.

"But r-e-a-l-l-y, r-e-a-l-l-y, ca-ca-cannot Tom She-She-She-Sheridan assist you, Marquis?" said the handsome Horace Beckford, in his usual stammering way.

"A very good joke for Fred Lamb, as the case stands now," replied the Duke, laughing; for a man of the world must laugh in these cases, though he should burst with the effort.

"Why don't she come?" said Sir John Shelley, who was one of the party.

An odd mad-looking Frenchman, in a white coat and a white hat, well known about Somerstown, passed at this moment, and observed His Grace, whom he knew well by sight, from the other side of the way. He had, a short time before, attempted to address me, when he met me walking alone, and inquired of me, when I had last seen the Marquis of Lorne, with whom he had often observed me walking? I made him no answer. In a fit of frolic, as if everybody combined at this moment against the poor, dear, handsome Argyle, the Frenchman called, as loud as

he could scream, from the other side of the way, "*Ah! ah! oh! oh! vous voilà, Monsieur le Comte Dromedaire* (alluding thus to the Duke's family name, as pronounced Camel), *Mais où est donc Madame la Comtesse?*"

"D——d impudent rascal!" said Argyle, delighted to vent his growing rage on somebody, and started across the road after the poor thin old Frenchman, who might have now said his prayers, had not his spider-legs served him better than his courage.

Fred Lamb was very angry with me for not laughing at this story; but the only feeling it excited in me, was unmixed gratitude towards the Duke, for remembering me still, and for having borne all this ridicule for my sake.

The next day Julia returned my visit; and, before we parted, she had learned, from my usual frankness, every particular of my life, without leaving me one atom the wiser as to what related to herself. I disliked mystery so much that, but that I saw Julia's proceeded from the natural extreme shyness of her disposition, I had, by this time, declined continuing her acquaintance. I decided, however, to try her another month, in order to give her time to become acquainted with me. She was certainly one of the best mannered women in England, not excepting even those of the very highest rank. Her handwriting, and her style, were both beautiful. She had the most delicately fair skin, and the prettiest arms, hands, and feet, and the most graceful form, which could well be imagined; but her features were not regular, nor their expression particularly good. She struck me as a woman of very violent passions, combined with an extremely shy and reserved disposition.

Mr. Johnstone seldom made his appearance oftener than twice a week. He came across a retired field to her house, though he might have got there more conveniently by the roadway. I sometimes accompanied her, and we sat on a gate to watch his approach to this field. Their meetings were full of rapturous and romantic delight. In his absence, she never received a single visitor, male or female, except myself; yet

she always, when quite alone, dressed in the most studied and fashionable style.

There was something dramatic about Julia. I often surprised her, hanging over her harp so very gracefully, the room so perfumed, the rays of her lamp so soft, that I could scarcely believe this *tout ensemble* to be the effect of chance or habit. It appeared arranged for the purpose, like a scene in a play. Yet who was it to affect? Julia never either received or expected company!

Everything went on as usual for another month or two; during which time Julia and I met every day, and she promised shortly to make me acquainted with her whole history. My finances were now sinking very low. Everything Lord Craven had given me, whether in money or valuables, I had freely parted with for my support. Fred Lamb, I thought, must know that these resources cannot last for ever; therefore I am determined not to speak to him on the subject.

I was lodging with a comical old widow, who had formerly been my sister Fanny's nurse when she was quite a child. This good lady, I believe, really did like me, and had already given me all the credit for board and lodging she could possibly afford. She now entered my room, and acquainted me that she actually had not another shilling, either to provide my dinner or her own.

Necessity hath no law, thought I, my eyes brightening, and my determination being fixed in an instant. In ten minutes more, the following letter was in the post office, directed to the Marquis of Lorne.

If you still desire my society, I will sup with you to-morrow evening in your own house.

Yours, ever affectionately,

HARRIETTE.

I knew perfectly well that on the evening I mentioned to His Grace, Fred Lamb would be at his father's country house, Brockett Hall.

The Duke's answer was brought to me by his groom, as soon as he had received my letter; it ran thus:

Are you really serious? I dare not believe it. Say, by my servant, that you will see me, at the turnpike, directly, for five minutes, only to put me out of suspense. I will not believe anything you write on this subject. I want to look at your eyes, while I hear you say yes.

Yours, most devotedly and impatiently,

LORNE.

I went to our old place of rendezvous to meet the Duke. How different, and how much more amiable, was his reception than that of Fred Lamb in Hull! The latter, all wild passion; the former, gentle, voluptuous, fearful of shocking or offending me, or frightening away my growing passion. In short, while the Duke's manner was almost as timid as my own, the expression of his eyes and the very soft tone of his voice, troubled my imagination, and made me fancy something of bliss beyond all reality.

We agreed that he should bring a carriage to the old turnpike, and thence conduct me to his house. "If you should change your mind!" said the Duke, returning a few steps after we had taken leave: "*mais tu viendras, mon ange? Tu ne seras pas si cruelle?*" Argyle is the best Frenchman I ever met with in England, and poor Tom Sheridan was the second best.

"And you," said I to Argyle, "suppose you were to break your appointment to-night?"

"Would you regret it?" Argyle inquired. "I won't have your answer while you are looking at those pretty little feet," he continued. "Tell me, dear Harriette, should you be sorry?"

"Yes," said I, softly, and our eyes met, only for an instant. Lorne's gratitude was expressed merely by pressing my hand.

"*A ce soir, donc*," said he, mounting his horse; and, waving his hand to me, he was soon out of sight.

CHAPTER II

I WILL not say in what particular year of his life the Duke of Argyle succeeded with me. Ladies scorn dates! Dates make ladies nervous and stories dry. Be it only known then, that it was just at the end of his Lorne shifts, and his lawn shirts. It was at that critical period of his life, when his whole and sole possessions appeared to consist in three dozen of ragged lawn shirts, with embroidered collars, well fringed in his service; a threadbare suit of snuff colour, a little old hat with very little binding left, an old horse, an old groom, an old carriage, and an old chateau. It was to console himself for all this antiquity, I suppose, that he fixed upon so very young a mistress as myself. Thus, after having gone through all the routine of sighs, vows, and rural walks, he, at last, saw me blooming and safe in his dismal chateau in Argyle Street.

Joy produced a palpitation which had, well nigh, been fatal to . . . No matter, to be brief . . .

A late hour in the morning blushed to find us in the arms of each other, as Monk Lewis, or somebody else says; but the morning was pale when compared to the red on my cheek—aye, ladies, pure red, when I, the very next day, acquainted Fred Lamb with my pretty, innocent, volatile adventure!

Fred was absolutely dumb from astonishment, and half choked with rage and pride. I would not plead my poverty; for I conceived that common sense and common humanity ought to have made this a subject of attention and inquiry to him.

"You told me he was, when he pleased, irresistible," said I.

"Yes, yes, yes," muttered Fred Lamb, between his closed teeth; "but a woman who loves a man is blind to the perfections

of every other. No matter, no matter, I am glad it has happened. I wish you joy. I——"

"Did I ever tell you I was in love with you?" said I, interrupting him. "Indeed it was your vanity deceived you, not I. You caused me to lose Lord Craven's protection, and, therefore, loving no man at the time, having never loved any, to you I went. I should have felt the affection of a sister for you, but that you made no sacrifices, no single attempt to contribute to my comfort or happiness. I will be the mere instrument of pleasure to no man. He must make a friend and companion of me, or he will lose me."

Fred Lamb left me in madness and fury; but I knew him selfish, and that he could dine on every imagined luxury, and drink his champagne, without a thought or care whether I had bread and cheese to satisfy hunger. Then who, with love, first love! beating in their hearts, could think of Frederick Lamb?

I immediately changed my lodgings for a furnished house at the west end of the town, better calculated to receive my new lover, whose passion knew no bounds. He often told me how much more beautiful I was than he had ever expected to find me.

I cannot, he wrote to me, during a short absence from town, I cannot, for circumstances prevent my being entirely yours. I fancied he alluded to his old flame, Lady W——, with whom the world said he had been intriguing nineteen years, but nothing can, nor shall, prevent my being, for ever, your friend, etc., etc.

If, thought I, this man is not to be entirely mine, perhaps I shall not be entirely his. I could have been——but this nasty Lady W—— destroys half my illusion. He used to sit with her, in her box at the opera, and wear a chain which I believed to be hers. He often came to me from the opera, with just such a rose in his bosom, as I had seen in hers. All this was a dead bore. One night I plucked the rose from his breast, another time I hid the chain, and all this, to him, seemed the effect of pure accident: for who, with pride, and youth, and beauty, would admit they were jealous?

One night (I am sure he will recollect that night, when he thought me mad), one night, I say, I could not endure the idea of Lady W——. That night we slept in Argyle House, and he really seemed most passionately fond of me. The idea suddenly crossed my mind, that all the tenderness and passion he seemed to feel for me, was shared between myself and Lady W——.

I could not bear it.

"I shall go home," said I, suddenly jumping out of bed, and beginning to dress myself, at three o'clock on a cold morning in December.

"Going home!" said the Duke. "Why, my dear little Harriette, you are walking in your sleep"; and he threw on his dressing-gown, and took hold of my hand.

"I am not asleep," said I; "but I will not stay in your room, nor go into your bed again; I cannot. I would rather die": and I burst into tears.

"My dear, dear Harriette," continued Argyle in great alarm; "for God's sake, tell me what on earth I have done to offend you?"

"Nothing—nothing," said I, drying my tears. "I have but one favour to ask: let me alone, instead of persecuting me with all this shew of tenderness": and I continued putting on my clothes.

"Gracious God!" said Argyle, "how you torment me! If," he proceeded, after pausing, "if you have ceased to love me—— if——if you are disgusted——"

I was silent.

"Do speak! pray, pray!" said he.

His agitation astonished me. It almost stopped his breathing. This man, thought I, is either very nervous, or he loves me just as I want to be loved. I had my hand on the door, to leave him. He took hold of me, and threw me from it, with some violence; locked it and snatched the key out; took me in his arms, and pressed me with almost savage violence against his breast.

"By heavens!" said he, "you shall not torture me so, another moment."

This wildness frightened me. He is going to kill me, thought I. I fixed my eyes on his face, to try and read my doom. Our eyes met, he pushed me gently from him, and burst into tears.

My jealousy was at an end, *au moins pour le moment.*

"I am not tired of you, dear Lorne," said I, kissing him eagerly. "How is it possible to be so? Dear Lorne, forgive me!"

Nothing was so bright nor so brilliant as Lorne's smile through a tear. In short, Lorne's expression of countenance, I say it now, when I neither esteem, nor love, nor like him—his expression, I say, is one of the finest things in nature.

Our reconciliation was completed, in the usual way, and on the spot.

The next morning, I was greatly surprised by a visit from my dear, lively sister Fanny, on her arrival from the country. Fanny was the most popular woman I ever met with. The most ill-natured and spiteful of her sex, could never find it in their hearts to abuse one who, in their absence, warmly fought all their battles, whenever anybody complained of them, where she was.

I often asked her why she defended, in society, certain unamiable persons? "Merely because they are not here to defend themselves, and therefore it is two to one against them," said Fanny.

Fanny, as the Marquis of Hertford uniformly insisted, was the most beautiful of all our family. He was very desirous of having her portrait painted by Lawrence, to place it in his own apartment. "That laughing dark blue eye of hers," he would say, "is unusually beautiful." His Lordship, by-the-bye, whatever people may say of the coldness of his heart, entertained a real friendship for poor Fanny; and proved it, by every kind attention to her during her last illness. He was the only man she admitted into her room, to take leave of her before she died, although hundreds, and those of the first rank and character, were sincerely desirous of doing so. I remember Lord Yarmouth's last visit to Brompton, where my poor sister died,

after an illness of three weeks. "Can I, or my cook, do anything in the world to be useful to her?" said he. I repeated that it was all too late—that she would never desire anything more, and all I wanted for her was plenty of Eau de Cologne, to wash her temples with; that being all she asked for. He did not send his groom for it, but galloped to town himself, and was back immediately.

This was something for Lord Yarmouth; but to proceed, Fanny was certainly very beautiful; she had led a most retired steady life for seven years, and was the mother of three children at the death of their father, Mr. Woodcock, to whom Fanny would have been married, could he have obtained a divorce from his wife. Everybody was mad for Fanny, and so they had been during Mr. Woodcock's life; but it was all in vain. Now there was a better chance for them, perhaps.

Fanny and our new acquaintance, Julia, soon became sworn friends. Most people believed that we were three sisters. Many called us the Three Graces. It was a pity that there were only three Graces!—and that is the reason, I suppose, why my eldest sister, Amy, was cut out of this ring, and often surnamed —one of the Furies. She was a fine dark woman too. Why she hated me all her life, I cannot conceive; nor why she invariably tried to injure me in the opinion of all those who liked me, I know not: but I can easily divine why she made love to my favourites; for they were the handsomest she could find. It was Amy, my eldest sister, who had been the first to set us a bad example. We were all virtuous girls, when Amy, one fine afternoon, left her father's house and sallied forth, like Don Quixote, in quest of adventures. The first person who addressed her was one Mr. Trench, a certain short-sighted pedantic man, whom most people know about town. I believe she told him that she was running away from her father. All I know for certain is, that when Fanny and I discovered her abode, we went to visit her, and when we asked her what on earth had induced her to throw herself away on an entire stranger whom she had never seen before? Her answer was, "I refused him the

whole of the first day; had I done so the second, he would have been in a fever."

Amy was really very funny, however spitefully disposed towards me. To be brief with her history: Trench put her to school again, from motives of virtue and economy. From that school she eloped with General Maddan.

Amy's virtue was something like the nine lives of a cat.

With General Maddan she, for several years, professed constancy; indeed, I am not quite certain that she was otherwise. I never, in my occasional visits, saw anything suspicious, except, once, a pair of breeches! !

It was one day when I went to call on her with my brother. General Maddan was not in town. She wanted to go to the opera. The fit had only just seized her, at past nine o'clock. She begged me to make her brother's excuse at home, as, she said, he must accompany her. "What, in those dirty boots?" I asked.—"I have got both dress-stockings and breeches upstairs, of Maddan's," replied Amy; and I assisted at the boy's toilette. In handing him the black pair of breeches, which Amy had presented me with, I saw marked, in Indian ink, what, being in the inside, had probably escaped her attention. It was simply the name of Proby.

"How came Lord Proby's black small-clothes here?" said I.

Amy snatched them out of my hand in a fury, and desired me to go out of the house. *Au reste*, she had often, at that time, three hundred pounds in her pocket at once, and poor Maddan had not a shilling. All this happened before I had left my home.

At the period I now write about, I believe that Maddan was abroad, and Amy lived in York Place, where she used to give gay evening parties to half the fashionable men in town, after the opera. She never came to me but from interested motives. Sometimes she forced herself into my private box, or teased me to make her known to the Duke of Argyle.

This year, we three Graces, as we were called, hired an opera box for the season together. Amy had another near us, for herself and her host of beaux. Her suppers on Saturday nights

were very gay. Julia and Fanny were always invited, but she was puzzled what to do with me. If I was present, at least half the men were on my side of the room; if I stayed away, so did all those who went only on my account.

This difficulty became a real privation to such men as delighted in us both together. Among these was Luttrell; everybody knows Luttrell, or if they do not, I will tell them more about him by-and-bye. Luttrell, I say, undertook to draw up a little agreement, stating, that since public parties ought not to suffer from private differences, we were thereby requested to engage ourselves to bow to each other in all societies, going through the forms of good breeding, even with more ceremony than if we had liked each other, on pain of being voted public nuisances and private enemies to all wit and humour.

Signed with our hands and seals. . . .

"Now," said Fanny one day to Julia, soon after our first opera season had begun, "Harriette and I propose cutting you, Mrs. Julia, altogether, if you do not, this very evening, give us a full and true account of yourself, from the day you were born, and the date thereof, up to this hour."

"No dates! no dates! I pray!" said Julia.

"Well, waive dates," added I, "and begin."

Julia then related, in her shy quiet way, what I will communicate as briefly as possible.

Julia's real name was Storer. She was the daughter of the Honourable Mrs. Storer, who was one of the maids of honour to our present king's royal mother, and the sister of Lord Carysfort.

Julia received part of her education in France, and finished it at the palace of Hampton Court, where her mother sent her on a visit to the wife of Colonel Cotton, who was an officer in the *10*th Dragoons.

Mrs. Cotton had a family of nine children, and very little fortune to support them. Julia had been, from her earliest youth, encouraging the most romantic passions which ever fired a youthful breast. With all this, her heart, unlike mine, was

as cold as her imagination was warm. What were parents, what were friends to her? What was anything on earth, to love?

The first night Colonel Cotton danced with her, she was mad! In four months more, she was pregnant. In nine months more, having concealed her situation, she was seized with the pangs of labour, while in the act of paying her respects to her Majesty! and all was consternation in the *beau château de Hampton!*

Mrs. Cotton, instead of sending for the accoucheur, with extreme propriety, though somewhat *mal-apropos*, loaded poor Julia with abuse! "Have yet a little mercy," said Julia, "and send for assistance."—"Never, never, you monster! you wretch! will I so disgrace your family," exclaimed Mrs. Cotton. Poor Julia's sufferings were short; but dreadfully severe. In about five hours, unassisted, she became the mother of a fine boy.

Julia could not attempt to describe the rage and fury either of her mother or brother. It was harsh, it was shocking, even as applied to the most hardened sinner, in such a state of mental and bodily suffering. Julia was, with her infant, by her noble relatives, hurried into the country, almost at the risk of her life, and Colonel Cotton was called out by young Storer, Julia's brother, and, I believe, wounded.

From her retirement, Julia had contrived to write to Colonel Cotton, by means of Colonel Thomas, to declare to him, that, if they were to meet no more, she would immediately destroy herself. In short, Cotton was raving mad for Julia, and Julia was wild for Cotton—*le moyen de les séparer?*

A very retired cottage near town was hired by Cotton for Julia, who inherited a small fortune over which her parents had no control; and on that she had supported herself, in the closest retirement, for more than eight years, when I, accidentally, became acquainted with her. Cotton was dismissed from his regiment, by his royal commander.

I never saw such romantic people, after nine years and five children! Julia! adored Julia! so he would write to her, if you love but as I do, we shall, to-morrow, at eight in the evening, enjoy another hour of perfect bliss! Julia! angel Julia! my

certain death would be the consequence of your inconstancy, etc.

Julia used to shew me these rhapsodies from Cotton, at which I always laughed heartily, and thus I used to put her in a passion continually.

At the opera I learned to be a complete flirt; for there I saw Argyle, incessantly, with Lady W——, and there it became incumbent on me either to laugh or cry. I let him see me flirt and look tender on Lord Burghersh, one night, on purpose, and the next day, when we three graces met him in the park, I placed in his hand a letter, which he was hastily concealing in his pocket, with a look of gratified vanity, believing, no doubt, that it was one of my soft effusions on the beauty of his eyes. "For the post," said I, nodding, as we were turning to leave him, and we all three burst into a loud laugh together. The letter was addressed to Lord Burghersh, merely to tell him to join us at Amy's after the next opera.

The next opera was unusually brilliant. Amy's box was close to ours, and, almost as soon as we were seated, she entered, dressed in the foreign style, which best became her, accompanied by Counts Woronzow, Beckendorff, and Orloff. Beckendorff was half mad for her, and wanted to marry her with his left hand.

"Why not with the right?" said Amy.

"I dare not," answered Beckendorff, "without the consent of the Emperor of Russia."

Amy had desired him to go to Russia, and obtain this consent from the Emperor, more than a month before; but still he lingered.

Our box was soon so crowded, that I was obliged to turn one out as fast as a new face appeared. Julia and Fanny left me to pay a visit to the enemy, as Luttrell used to call Amy. Observing me, for an instant, the Duke of Devonshire came into my box, believing that he did me honour.

"Duke," said I, "you cut me in Piccadilly to-day."

"Don't you know," said thick-head, "don't you know, *belle Harriette*, that I am blind as well as deaf, and a little absent too?"

"My good young man," said I, out of all patience, "*allez donc*

à l'hopital des invalides: for really, if God has made you blind and deaf, you must be absolutely insufferable when you presume to be absent too. The least you can do, as a blind, deaf man, is surely to pay attention to those who address you."

"I never heard anything half so severe as *la belle Harriette*," drawled out the duke.

Luttrell now peeped his nose into my box, and said, dragging in his better half, half-brother I mean, fat Nugent, "A vacancy for two! How happens this? you'll lose your character, Harriette."

I'm growing stupid, from sympathy, I suppose," I observed, glancing at his grace, who, being as deaf as a post, poor fellow, bowed to me for the supposed compliment.

"You sup with Amy, I hope?" said I to Luttrell. "And you?" turning to Nugent.

"There's a princess in the way," replied Nugent, alluding to the late Queen.

"Nonsense," said Luttrell, "Her Royal Highness has allowed me to be off."

"You can take liberties with her," Nugent remarked. "You great wits can do what you please. She would take it very ill of me; besides, I wish Amy would send some of those dirty Russians away. Count Orloff is the greatest beast in nature."

Lord Alvanly now entered my box.

"*Place pour un*," said I, taking hold of the back of the Duke of Devonshire's chair.

"I am going," said His Grace; "but, seriously, Harriette, I want to accomplish dining alone some evening, on purpose to pay you a visit."

"There will be no harm in that," said I.

"None! None!" answered Luttrell, who took my allusion.

Alvanly brought me a tall, well-dressed foreigner, whom he was waiting to present to me, as his friend.

"That won't do, Lord Alvanly," said I; "really, that is no introduction, and less recommendation. Name your friend, or away with him."

"*Ma foi, madame*," said the foreigner, "*un nom ne fait rien du tout. Vous me voyez là, madame, honnête homme, de cinq pieds et neuf pouces.*"

"*Madame est persuadée de vos cinq pieds, mais elle n'est pas si sure de vos neuf pouces*," Alvanly observed.

"*Adieu, ma belle Harriette*," said the Duke, at last, taking my hint: and rising to depart.

Julia and Fanny now returned: the latter, as usual, was delighted to meet Alvanly.

"Do you come from the enemy?" Luttrell inquired of them.

"Yes," replied Fanny, laughing.

"My dear Fanny," said Luttrell, in his comical, earnest, methodistical manner, "my dear Fanny, this will never do!"

"What won't do?" inquired Fanny.

"These Russians, my dear."

"She has got a little Portuguese, besides the Russians, coming to her to-night," said I.—"The Count Palmella."

"The ambassador?" Nugent asked.

"God bless my soul!!" said Luttrell, looking up to the ceiling with such a face! Tom Sheridan would have liked to have copied it, when he played the methodist, in a tub, at Mrs. Beaumont's masquerade.

"They are only all brought up upon trial," I observed; "she will cut the rest, as soon as she has fixed on one of them."

"Yes; but you see, coming after these cossacks is the devil!" lisped Alvanly, with his usual comical expression. "God bless your soul, we have no chance after these fellows."

"There is Argyle looking at you, from Lady W——'s box," Nugent said.

The remark put me out of humour, although I did observe that, though he sat in her ladyship's box, he was thinking most of me. Nevertheless, it was abominably provoking.

Lord Frederick Bentinck next paid me his usual visit.

"Everybody is talking about you," said His Lordship. "Two men, downstairs, have been laying a bet that you are Lady

Tavistock. Mrs. Orby Hunter says you are the handsomest woman in the house."

Poor Julia, all this time, did not receive the slightest compliment or attention from anybody. At last she kissed her hand to someone in a neighbouring box.

"Who are you bowing to?" I inquired.

"An old flame of mine, who was violently in love with me, when I was a girl, at Hampton Court," whispered Julia. "I have never seen him since I knew Cotton."

"What is his name?" I asked.

"George Brummell," answered Julia.

I had never, at that time, heard of George Brummell.

"Do you know a Mr. George Brummell?" said I to Lord Alvanly.

Before His Lordship could answer my question, Brummell entered the box; and, addressing himself to Julia, expressed his surprise, joy, and astonishment, at meeting with her.

Julia was now all smiles, and sweetness. Just before Brummell's, arrival she was growing a little sulky. Indeed she had reason, for in vain did we cry her up, and puff her off, as Lord Carysfort's niece, or as an accomplished, elegant, charming creature, daughter of a maid of honour: she did not take. The men were so rude as often to suffer her to follow us, by herself, without offering their arms to conduct her to the carriage. She was, in fact, so reserved, so shy, and so short-sighted, that, not being very young, nobody would be at the trouble of finding out what she was.

In the round room we held separate levees. Amy always fixed herself near enough to me to see what I was about, and try to charm away some of my admirers. Heaven knows! Fanny and I had plenty to spare her; for they did so flock about us, they scarcely left us breathing room. Argyle looked as if he wanted to join us, but was afraid of Lady W——.

"Are you not going home, pretty?" he would say to me, between his teeth, passing close to my ear.

"Do speak louder, Marquis," I answered, provoked that he

should be afraid of any woman but myself. "I am not going home these three hours. I am going first to Amy's party."

Lorne looked, not sulky, nor cross, as Fred Lamb would have done; but smiled beautifully, and said: "At three, then, may I go to you?"

"Yes," answered I, putting my hand into his, and again I contrived to forget Lady W——.

There was all the world at Amy's, and not half room enough for them. Some were in the passage, and some in the parlour, and in the drawing-room one could scarcely breathe. At the top of it, Amy sat coquetting with her tall Russians. The poor Count Palmella stood gazing on her, at a humble distance.

The little delicate weak gentlemanlike Portuguese was no match for the three cossacks. I do not believe he got in a single word the whole evening, but once; when Amy remarked, that she should go the next evening to see the tragedy of Omeo.

"What tragedy is that, pray?" drawled out the Honourable John William Ward, starting from a fit of the dismals, just as if someone had gone behind him and, with a flapper, reminded him that he was at a party, and ought to *faire l'aimable aux dames*.

"You may laugh at me as much as you please," answered Amy, "and I must have patience and bear it, ight or ong; for I cannot pronounce the letter *r*."

"How very odd!" I remarked. "Why, you could pronounce it well enough at home!" I really did not mean this to tease her; for I thought, perhaps, lisping might grow upon us, as we got older, but I soon guessed it was all sham, by the gathering storm on Amy's countenance. The struggle between the wish to shew off effeminate softness to her lovers, and her ardent desire to knock me down, I could see by an arch glance at me, from Fanny's laughing eye, and a shrug of her shoulder was understood by that sister, as well as by myself. Fanny's glance was the slyest thing in nature, and was given in perfect fear and trembling.

"Harriette's correctness may be, I am sorry to say——," and

she paused to endeavour to twist her upper lip, trembling with fury, into the shape and form of what might be most pure and innocent in virtuous indignation!

Count Beckendorff eyed me with a look of pity and noble contempt, and then fixed his eyes, with rapture, on his angel's face!

Joking apart, he was a monstrous fool, that same Count Beckendorff, in the shape of a very handsome young cossack.

"Where's the treaty of peace?" said Nugent, dreading a rupture, which would deaden half the spirit of the little pleasant suppers he wished to give us, at his own rooms in the Albany. "No infringement, we beg, ladies. We have the treaty, under your pretty hands and seals."

"Peace be to France, if France, in peace, permit it!" said I, holding out my hand to Amy, in burlesque majesty.

Amy could not, for the life of her, laugh with the rest; because she saw that they thought me pleasant. She, however, put out her hand hastily, to have done with what was bringing me into notice: and, that the subject might be entirely changed, and I as much forgotten, she must waltz, that instant, with Beckendorff.

"Sydenham!" said Amy, to one of her new admirers, who, being flute-mad, and a beautiful flute-player, was always ready.

"The flute does not mark the time enough for waltzing," said he, taking it out of a drawer; "but I shall be happy to accompany Harriette's waltz on the pianoforte, because she always plays in good time."

"Do not play, Harriette," said Amy, for fear it should strike anyone that I played well; "if I had wished her to be troubled ,I should have asked her myself. The flute is quite enough"; and she began twirling her tall cossack round the room. He appeared charmed to obey her commands, and sport his really graceful waltzing.

"I do not think it a trouble, in the least," I observed, opening the instrument, without malice or vanity. I was never vain of music; and, at that early age, so much envy never entered my head. I hated playing too; but fancied that I was civil in

catching up the air, and accompanying Colonel Sydenham.

"Harriette puts me out," said Amy, stopping, and she refused to stand up again, in spite of all Sydenham could say about my very excellent ear for music.

"*Madame a donc le projet d'aller à Drury Lane, demain?*" said the Count Palmella at last, having been waiting, with his mouth open, ever since Amy mentioned Omeo, for an opportunity of following up the subject.

Amy darted her bright black eyes upon him, as though she had said, *Ah! te voila! d'où viens tu?* but without answering him, or, perhaps, understanding what he said.

"*Si madame me permettera*," continued the Count, "*j'aurai l'honneur de lui engager une loge.*"

"*Oui, s'il vous plaît, je vous en serai obligée*," said Amy, though in somewhat worse French.

The celebrated beau, George Brummell, who had been presented to Amy by Julia, in the round room at the opera, now entered, and put poor Julia in high spirits. Brummell, as Julia always declared, was, when in the 10th Dragoons, a very handsome young man. However that might have been, nobody could have mistaken him for anything like handsome, at the moment she presented him to us. Julia assured me that he had, by some accident, broken the bridge of his nose, and which said broken bridge had lost him a lady, and her fortune of twenty thousand pounds. This, from the extreme flatness of it, of his nose, I mean, not the fortune, appeared probable.

He was extremely fair, and the expression of his countenance far from disagreeable. His person, too, was rather good; nor could anybody find fault with the taste of all those who, for years, had made it a rule to copy the cut of Brummell's coat, the shape of his hat, or the tie of his neckcloth: for all this was in the very best possible style.

"No perfumes," Brummell used to say, "but very fine linen, plenty of it, and country-washing."

"If John Bull turns round to look after you, you are not well dressed; but either too stiff, too tight, or too fashionable."

"Do not ride in ladies' gloves, particularly with leather breeches."

In short, his maxims on dress were excellent. Besides this, he was neither uneducated nor deficient. He possessed, also, a sort of quaint dry humour, not amounting to anything like wit; indeed, he said nothing which would bear repetition; but his affected manners and little absurdities amused for the moment. Then it became the fashion to court Brummell's society, which was enough to make many seek it who cared not for it; and many more wished to be well with him, through fear, for all knew him to be cold, heartless, and satirical.

It appeared plain and evident to me, that his attention to Julia was no longer the effect of love. Piqued at the idea of having been refused marriage by a woman with whom Cotton had so easily succeeded, *sans ceremonie*, he determined in his own mind soon to be even with his late brother officer.

And pray, madam, the reader may ask, how came you to be thus early acquainted with George Brummell's inmost soul?

A mere guess. I will tell you why.

Brummell talked to Julia, while he looked at me; and, as soon as he could manage it with decency, he contrived to place himself by my side.

"What do you think of Colonel Cotton?" said he, when I mentioned Julia.

"A very fine dark man," I answered, "though not at all to my taste, for I never admire dark men."

"No man in England stinks like Cotton," said Brummell.

Ah! ah! thought I, *me voilà au fait!*

"A little Eau de Portugal would do no harm in that quarter, at all events," I remarked, laughing, while alluding to his dislike of perfumery.

Amy gave us merely a tray-supper in one corner of the drawing-room, with plenty of champagne and claret. Brummell, in his zeal for cold chicken, soon appeared to forget everybody in the room. A loud discordant laugh from the Honourable John Ward, who was addressing something to

Luttrell at the other end of the table, led me to understand that he had just, in his own opinion, said a very good thing; yet I saw his corner of the room full of serious faces.

"Do you keep a valet, Sir?" said I.

"I believe I have a rascal of that kind at home," said the learned ugly scion of nobility with disgusting affectation.

"Then," I retorted, "do, in God's name, bring him next Saturday to stand behind your chair."

"For what, I pray?"

"Merely to laugh at your jokes," I rejoined. "It is such hard work for you, Sir, who have both to cut the jokes and to laugh at them too!"

"Do pray show him up, there's a dear creature, whenever you have an opportunity," whispered Brummell in my ear, with his mouth full of chicken. "Is he not an odious little monster of ill-nature, take him altogether?" I asked.

"And look at that tie!" said Brummell, shrugging up his shoulders, and fixing his eyes on Ward's neckcloth.

Ward was so frightened at this commencement of hostilities from me, that he immediately began to pay his court to me, and engaged me to take a drive with him the next morning, in his curricle.

"Go with him," whispered Brummell in my ear. "Keep on terms with him, on purpose to laugh at him." And then he turned round to Fanny, to ask her who her man of that morning was?

"You allude to the gentleman I was riding with in the Park?" answered Fanny.

"I know who he is," said Alvanly. "Fanny is a very nice girl, and I wish she would not encourage such people. Upon my word it is quite shocking."

"Who did you ride with to-day, Fanny?" I inquired.

"A d——d sugar baker," said Alvanly.

"I rode out to-day," replied Fanny, reddening, "with a very respectable man, of large fortune."

"Oh yes!" said Alvanly, "there is a good deal of money to be got in the sugar line."

"Why do not you article yourself then to a baker of it," I observed, "and so pay some of your debts?" This was followed by a laugh, which Alvanly joined in with great good humour.

"What is his name?" inquired Luttrell.

"Mr. John Mitchel," answered Fanny. "He received his education at a public school, with Lord Alvanly."

"I do not recollect Mitchel," retorted Alvanly; "but I believe there were a good many grocers admitted at that time."

Fanny liked Lord Alvanly of all things, and knew very little of Mr. Mitchel, except that he professed to be her very ardent admirer; yet her defence of the absent was ever made with all the warmth and energy her shyness would permit. "Now, gentlemen," said Fanny, "have the goodness to listen to the facts as they really are." Everybody was silent, for everybody delighted to hear Fanny talk.

"That little fat gentleman there,"—looking at Lord Alvanly—"whom you all suppose a mere idle, lazy man of genius, I am told, studies *bons mots* all night in his bed. (A laugh.) Further, I have been led to understand, that, being much lower down in the class than Mitchel, though of the same age, his lordship, in the year eighteen hundred and something or other, was chosen, raised, and selected, for his civil behaviour, to the situation of prime and first fag to Mr. Mitchel, in which said department, his lordship distinguished himself much, by the very high polish he put upon Mr. J. Mitchel's boots and shoes."

There was not a word of truth in this story, the mere creation of Fanny's brain; yet still there was a probability about it, as they had been at school together, and which, added to Fanny's very pleasing, odd mode of expression, set the whole room in a roar of laughter. Alvanly was just as much amused as the rest; for Fanny's humour had no real severity in it at any time.

"But, Fanny, you will make a point of cutting this grocer, I hope?" observed Brummell, as soon as the laugh had a little subsided.—"Do pray, Fanny," said I, "cut your Mitchels. I vote for cutting all the grocers and valets who intrude themselves into good society."

"My father was a very superior valet," Brummell quickly observed, "and kept his place all his life, and that is more than Palmerston will do," he continued, observing Lord Palmerston, who was in the act of making his bow to Amy, having just looked in on her, from Lady Castlereagh's.

"I don't want any of Lady Castlereagh's men," said Amy. "Let all those who prefer her Saturday night to mine, stay with her."

"Who on earth," said Luttrell, with his usual earnestness, "who on earth would think of Lady Castlereagh, when they might be here?"

"Why, Brummell went there for an hour, before he came here," said Alvanly.

"Mr. Brummell had better go and pass a second hour with her ladyship," retorted Amy, "for we are really too full here."

"I am going for one," I said, putting on my shawl; for I began to think it would not do to neglect Argyle, altogether. I made use of one of the Russian's carriages, to which Brummell handed me.

"To Argyle House, I suppose?" said Brummel, and then whispered in my ear, "You will be Duchess of Argyle, Harriette."

I found Argyle at his door, with his key, a little impatient. I asked him why he did not go to Amy's?

"I don't know your sister," answered His Grace, "and I dislike what I have seen of her. She makes so many advances to me!" I defended my sister, as warmly as though she had really treated me with kindness, and felt, at that time, seriously angry with the Duke for abusing her.

The next morning, from my window, I saw Amy drive up to my door, in the Count Palmella's barouche. She wants me to write a copy of a letter, for some of her men, thought I, well knowing that affection never brought Amy to visit me.

"Are you alone?" asked Amy, bouncing into the room.

"Yes," said I.

"Then tell that count, downstairs, he may go home," addressing my servant.

"Poor little man!" I remarked, "how terribly rude! I could not be rude to such a very timid gentlemanly man as that!"

"Oh, he makes me sick," said Amy, "and I am come to consult you as to what I had better do. I like liberty best. If I put myself under the protection of anybody, I shall not be allowed to give parties, and sit up all night; but then I have my desk full of long bills, without receipts!"

"I thought you were to marry Beckendorff, and go to Russia," I observed.—"Oh, true, I have come to tell you about Beckendorff. He is off for Russia this morning, to try to obtain the consent of the Emperor and that of his own family. There was no harm in sending him there, you know! for I can easily change my mind when he comes back, if anything which I like better occurs. He wished George to be his aide-de-camp; but George would not go."

"Is not Beckendorff a general in the service of the Emperor?" I asked.

"Yes, yes! but never mind Beckendorff," answered Amy, impatiently. "I want two hundred pounds directly. It spoils all one's independence, and one's consequence, to ask Englishmen for money. Palmella wishes to have me altogether under his protection. He is rich; but—but I like Colonel Sydenham best."

"Sydenham has no money," said I. "Palmella seems disposed to do a great deal for you, and he is very gentlemanlike: therefore, if a man you must have, my voice is for Palmella!"

"Well," said Amy, "I cannot stop! I do not much care. Palmella makes me sick too. It cannot be helped. You write me a copy, directly, to say I consent to enter into the arrangement, as he calls it, which he proposed: namely, two hundred pounds a month, paid in advance, and the use of his horses and carriage." This letter was soon dispatched to his Excellency Palmella; and Amy, shortly afterwards, took her leave.

The next day, as I was returning home from my solitary walk, reflections the most despondingly melancholy crowded on my mind. I thought of the youth I was passing away, in

passions wild and ungovernable; and though ever ready to sacrifice more than life for those I have loved, with real genuine warmth and tenderness of heart, yet I had, perhaps, deserved that none should, hereafter, remember me with affection; for my actions had been regulated by the impulse and feelings of that heart alone, void of any other principle than what it had dictated. I was roused by a sudden tap on the shoulder, from the coarse, red, ungloved hand of my old friend, Lord Frederick Bentinck.

"My lord, I was just going to drown myself, therefore pray do not leave me here alone."

"I must," said his Lordship, panting, "for I have a great deal to do. I ought to be at the Horse Guards at this moment."

"Nonsense! But if you really can do anything, I wish to heaven you would put on a pair of gloves."

"I only wish," answered His Lordship, speaking loud, in a good-natured passion, "I only wish that you were compelled to listen to the sort of things I am obliged to attend to daily. Everybody wants promotion. No man will be satisfied with an answer. For my part, I have got into a way of writing my letters, as soon as I have stated all that is to be said. I hate talking, many people expose themselves in that way, so *adio*." It occurred to me, as soon as His Lordship had left me, how unfortunate for his taciturn disposition was the meeting of Sir Murray Maxwell's friends, which took place some time ago, to commemorate that highly-respected gentleman's broken pate. The noble lord was chosen steward of the feast, and, whatever might be the exposure, either in the way or lack of intellect, Lord Frederick must inevitably come forward with a maiden speech. The said discourse, however, would no doubt have redounded to the credit and glory of His Lordship's able attorney, in spite of the many restrictions he had received, not to put in any break-teeth long words; but, alas! His Lordship was not aware of the defect of a memory, which had never been so exerted, and, at the very critical moment, after he had risen to address the attentive assembly, he discovered, with dismay,

that he had forgotten every word of his speech. What was to be done? He resolved to address them in detached sentences, delivered in a voice of thunder; such as, My principles, gentlemen—likewise,—observe—my friends,—but I therefore—being, as I say,—a man of few words, gentlemen. The intervals being filled up with much gesticulation, everybody advanced their heads and redoubled their attention, to try to hear what could not be heard. Those who were at a distance, said, "We are too far off," and those immediately next to him, thought themselves too near, or suspected the wine had taken an unusual effect, owing to the heated atmosphere of the crowded apartment. All resolved to secure better situations on the next meeting, that they might profit by so fine and affecting a discourse.

The season for Argyle's departure from London, for the North, was now drawing very near. He often spoke of it with regret, and sometimes he talked about my accompanying him.

"Not I, indeed!" was my answer: for I was an unsettled sort of being; and nothing but the whole heart of the man I loved could settle me.

Lorne had fascinated me, and was the first man for whom I had felt the least passion; but his age made him fitter to be my father than my friend and companion: and then this Lady W——! How could I fix my affections on a man whom I knew to be attached still to another woman! Indeed, even his inconstancy to Lady W—— often disgusted me.

"You will not accompany me to Scotland then?" said the Duke.

"No!"

"*Cela, donc, est décidé.*"

"*Oui.*"

CHAPTER III

I WAS getting into debt, as well as my sister Amy, when it so came to pass, as I have since heard say, that the—immortal! ! ! No; that's common; a very outlandish distinction, fitter for a lady in a balloon. The terrific! ! ! that will do better. I have seen his grace in his cotton nightcap. Well, then, the terrific Duke of Wellington! ! the wonder of the world! ! Having six feet from the tail to the head, and—but there is a certain technicality in the expressions of the gentleman at Exeter 'Change, when he has occasion to show off a wild beast, which it would be vanity in me to presume to imitate; so leaving out his dimensions, etc. etc. it was even the Duke of Wellington, whose laurels, like those of the giant in the *Vicar of Wakefield*, had been hardly earned by the sweat of his little dwarfs' brows, and the loss of their little legs, arms, and eyes; who, feeling himself amorously given.——It was in summer.——One sultry evening, ordered his coachman to set him down at the White Horse Cellar, in Piccadilly, whence he sallied forth, on foot, to No. 2 or 3, in Berkeley Street, and rapped hastily at the door, which was immediatly opened by the tawdry, well-rouged housekeeper of Mrs. Porter, who, with a significant nod of recognition, led him into her mistress's boudoir, and then hurried away, simpering, to acquaint the good Mrs. Porter with the arrival of one of her oldest customers.

Mrs. Porter, on entering her boudoir, bowed low; but she had bowed lower still to His Grace, who had paid but shabbily for the last *bonne fortune* she had contrived to procure him.

"Is it not charming weather?" said Mrs. Porter, by way of managing business with something like decency.

"There is a beautiful girl just come out," said His Grace,

without answering her question; "a very fine creature; they call her Harriette, and——"

"My lord," exclaimed Mrs. Porter, interrupting him, "I have had three applications this very month for the girl they call Harriette, and I have already introduced myself to her."

This was a fact, which happened while I was in Somers-town, and which I have forgotten to relate.

"It was," continued Mrs. Porter, "at the very earnest request of General Walpole. She is the wildest creature I ever saw. She did not affect modesty, nor appear in the least offended at my intrusion. Her first question was, is your man handsome? I answered frankly, that the General was more than sixty years of age; and at which account she laughed heartily; and then, seeming to recollect herself, she said, she really was over head and ears in debt, and therefore must muster up courage to receive one visit from her antiquated admirer, at my house."

"Well?" interrupted Wellington, half jealous, half disgusted.

"Well, my lord," continued Mrs. Porter, "the appointment was made for eight o'clock on the following evening, at which hour the old general was punctual, and fidgeted about the room over this, my lord, for more than three quarters of an hour. At last, he rang the bell violently: I answered it; and he told me, in a fury, he would not thus be trifled with. I was beginning very earnest protestations, when we heard a loud rap at the street door, and, immediately afterwards, my housekeeper entered, to inform me that a lady, whose face was covered with a thick black veil, had just arrived in a hackney-coach, and she had shewn her into the best room.

"She came then?" inquired Wellington impatiently, and blowing his nose.

"You shall hear, my lord," continued Mrs. Porter. "The old general, in a state of perfect ecstasy, took me by the hand, and begged me to pardon his testy humour, assuring me, that he had been for more than a year following Harriette, and therefore, that this disappointment had been too much for his stock of patience.

"I led the way to the room, where we expected to find Harriette. The black veil did not surprise us. She was too young to be expected to enter my house, void of shame. Judge our astonishment, my lord, when the incognita, throwing back her veil with much affectation, discovered a wrinkled face, which had weathered at least sixty summers, aye, and winters too! 'The Lord defend me!' said I. 'Who the devil are you?' said the general. 'A charming creature,' replied the hag, 'if you did but know me. A widow, too, dear general, very much at your disposal; for my dear good man has been dead these sixty years.' 'You are a set of——' The general was interrupted by his fair incognita, with—'Here is gallantry! here is treatment of the soft sex! No, Mr. General, not the worst of your insinuations shall ever make me think the less of myself!'

"The general, at this moment, beginning to feel a little ashamed, and completely furious, contrived to gain the street, declaring that he would never enter my house again. His fair one insisted on following him; and all I could say or do would not prevent her. I know not what became of them both."

"My good woman," said Wellington, without making any remarks on her story, "my time is precious. One hundred guineas are yours, and as much Harriette's, if you can induce her to give me the meeting."

"My dear lord," said Mrs. Porter, quite subdued, "what would I not do to serve you? I will pay Harriette a visit early to-morrow morning; although, my lord, to tell you the truth, I was never half so afraid of any woman in my life. She is so wild, and appears so perfectly independent and careless of her own interests and welfare, that I really do not know what is likely to move her."

"Nonsense!" said Wellington, "it is very well known that the Marquis of Lorne is her lover."

"Lord Lorne may have gained Harriette's heart," said Mrs. Porter, just as if she understood the game of hearts! "However," added she, "I will not give up the business till I have had an interview with Harriette."

"And make haste about it," said Wellington, taking up his hat; "I shall call for your answer in two days. In the meantime, if you have anything like good news to communicate, address a line to Thomas's Hotel, Berkeley Square."

These two respectable friends now took leave of each other, as we will of the subject, *pour le moment au moins*.

I rather think it must have been on the very day the above scene took place, that Fanny, Julia, and myself dined together at my house; and Amy, unasked, joined us after dinner, because she had nothing better to do.

"You are welcome," said I to Amy, "so that you bring me no men; but men I will not admit."

"Why not?" Amy inquired.

"Why? because I am not a coquette, like you; and it fatigues me to death to be eternally making the agreeable to a set of men who might be all buried, and nobody would miss them. Besides, I have seen such a man! ! !"

"What manner of man have you seen?" asked Fanny.

"A very god!" retorted I.

"Who is he?" inquired Amy.

"I do not know," was my answer.

"What is his name?"

"I cannot tell."

"Where did you see him?"

"In Sloane Street, riding on horseback, and followed by a large dog."

"What a simpleton you are," observed Amy.

"I never made myself so ridiculous about any man yet," I observed, "as you have done about that frightful, pale William Ponsonby."

"Oh, he is, indeed, a most adorable heavenly creature," rejoined Amy, turning up her eyes in a fit of heroics.

"Good gracious! how can people be so blind?" exclaimed I. "Why, he has not a single point of beauty about him, and besides, he treats you like a dog."

"So he does," acknowledged Amy, waxing indignant.

"How do you think he treated me last night?"

"God knows!" interposed Julia.

"He got into my bed!" continued Amy.

"Mercy on us! !" exclaimed Julia.

"Why, that is the very thing you have been wanting him to do for the last six months," returned I. "My fingers ache with all the pressing invitations you have made me write to William Ponsonby. And——"

"Which you know he always refused," continued Amy. "Last night I went home late," she proceeded, "and therefore hurried up to bed, and began undressing myself, making use of every convenience in my bedroom, without delicacy or ceremony. Only imagine my dismay, just as I was stepping into bed, to hear a loud laugh, and see William Ponsonby's face peeping between the curtains."

"What a brute William Ponsonby must be," said I.

"Pray how came he there?" inquired Julia.

He had called in Amy's absence, and the servants having strict orders to admit William Ponsonby at any time, he was shown into the drawing-room, from which, being very drunk, he had marched into her bedroom, where he had slept himself sober, in his clothes. The servants, concluding that no man would have done this, without particular permission from their mistress, did not mention the circumstance to Amy. Ponsonby's apology to Amy was, drunkenness. He hastened out of the room, rudely observing that he came there to seek repose, not a companion.

"And you still like this brute?" observed I.

"Brute!" retorted Amy, "he is a god!" and this wretched fellow went by the name of Amy's god ever afterwards. I allude to William Ponsonby of the Besborough family.

"Amy's story," said Julia, "reminds me of something very ridiculous which happened to me at Hampton Court, while I was staying with Mrs. Cotton."

We pressed her to tell us all about it.

"Did I ever tell you where and how Cotton first succeeded

with me?" inquired Julia.

"It was at Hampton Court," I answered.

"On a stone staircase," added Julia. "But to proceed with my story: I can scarcely describe to you the difficulty which existed in the palace, of securing a *tête à tête:* with all joint inventions on the stretch, and all our hopes of happiness depending on it, we did not accomplish more than three private interviews in a month.

"My bedroom," continued Julia, "was next to mamma's. My sister always shared her mother's bed; but used my room as her dressing-room, wherein was deposited the whole of her wardrobe.

" 'Suppose,' said Cotton one day to me, 'suppose I were to conceal myself under your bed?'

" 'But then my mamma always comes into my room before she sleeps, to kiss me, and wish me good-night.'

" 'I will wait patiently till all are retired to rest.'

" 'How will you endure to be under a bed for three or four hours?'

" 'What would I not endure?'

" 'But then this is my sister's dressing-room, and here she always undresses.'

" 'I will be silent as the grave,' said Cotton."

In short, they had no better remedy.

"Fancy him then," Julia went on, "safely concealed under my bed. Fancy myself and sister about to undress together. Fancy the contrast! while I was studying my attitudes, as I folded my hair gracefully round my head, and bathed my hands and face with rose-water, just as might be expected by any woman who believed herself watched by an adoring, romantic lover; my sister was carelessly washing, splashing, and rattling, and talking to me of her sensations, her pimples, her wants, and her wishes, etc. I really thought I should have fainted with terror and dismay."

This narrative of Julia's was a source of considerable amusement to us all.

"Now," said I to Amy, "since it seems we are in the humour to relate some of our adventures, suppose you confess."

"I confess! what?"

"Confess," added I, "how you came by all those nice-looking hundred-pound notes, which I used to see you with, when you were with poor Maddan, and I was a good little girl at home."

"It is all a story of Harriette's making," said Amy.

"Come, come," Fanny observed, "what is the use of being sly as to what happened so long ago? Give us the whole history of those self-same bank notes."

"Why, you must know, Hart Davis——"

"Good heavens!" exclaimed I, "did you have that frightful creature, Hart Davis?"

"Never," said Amy. "The whole of all that money came out of his pocket, notwithstanding."

"And all in the way of honesty?" inquired Julia.

"Not quite," proceeded Amy; "he used to pat me."

"How, pat you!" we eagerly and inquisitively cried out with one consent.

"So," said Amy, shewing me with her hand on my arm.

"Was that all?" asked I.

"Do pray send your patting men to me," remarked Julia.

"That was all," said Amy, I assure you. 'Aamy! Aamy!' he used to say, drawing down his bushy eyebrows, and patting me thus—'Aamy! Aamy! does that feel nice?'—'No! to be sure not,' I used to answer, very fiercely; but, at last, one day when he called, I wanted a hundred pounds, of all things, to hire an opera box. So when he began with his usual 'Aamy, Aamy, does that feel nice?' I made a face so. . . ."

"How?" said Julia, and I, and Fanny, all at once.

"So. . . ." repeated Amy.

The face was too ridiculous, and yet we laughed immoderately.

"Pray," said I, at length, "did that face take, with your friend Hart Davis?"

"Yes," said Amy, "I made this sort of face, and said, 'Y-e-s, t h a n k y o u—I think it does feel ra-ther nice.'

"This confession was always enough to secure me a hundred pounds from Hart Davis, whenever I could find in my heart to make it, which, you may conceive, was only on great occasions!"

"And what," asked I, "have you done with Palmella?"

"Oh!" replied Amy, in some little confusion, "I have never seen him since."

"Did you send the letter I wrote for you?"

"Yes," answered Amy.

"And did he send you the two hundred pounds?"

"Directly," rejoined Amy, "with a letter full of professions of the deepest gratitude."

"And where is that poor dear little man now?" inquired I.

"God knows!" replied Amy. "I have been denied to him ever since. Sydenham has been telling me that I am too beautiful, and it would really be too great a sacrifice, for me to throw myself away on Palmella."

"Did Sydenham say your returning the two hundred pounds would be too great a sacrifice also?"

"No! but I have spent it."

It was now growing late, and we separated.

The next morning, my servant informed me that a lady desired to speak a word to me. Her name was Porter.

"You are come to scold me for sending my old nurse to console the general?" said I, when I entered the room where she was waiting.

"Not at all, my dear, wild young lady," answered Mrs. Porter; "but I am now come to inform you, that you have made the conquest of a very fine, noble, most unexceptionable man."

"Delightful!" said I. "Who is he?"

"I dare not tell you his name," interrupted Mrs. Porter; "but you may rest assured that he is a man of fashion and rank."

"It will not do;" reiterated I, striking my head. "Tell your friend that I have no money, that I do not know how to take care of myself, and Argyle takes no care of me. Tell him that nobody wants a real steady friend more than I do; but I cannot

meet a stranger as a lover. Tell him all this, if he is really handsome, that is to say: (for the stranger I had twice met, riding down Sloane Street, accompanied by his large dog, had lately ran often in my head,) and let me know what he says, to-morrow."

Mrs. Porter acquiesced, and, hearing a loud rap at my door, she hastily took her leave.

This was Fanny. At his own earnest request, she had brought me the son of the rich Freeling, secretary to the General Post Office; saying: "Mr. Freeling will allow me no rest till I have made him known to you."

The young man was civil and humble, and kept a proper distance; and was rather a bore. In point of fact, at least in my humble opinion, there is no endurable medium between men of the very highest fashion, and honest tradesmen, to those who have once acquired a taste and habit of living with high-bred people. Young Freeling was, however, as well as could be expected, as they say of ladies in the straw. He was a gentleman as far as grammar, and eating with his fork, went; and Fanny proposed our going to Covent Garden together that evening. She wanted to show little Fanny (for by that appellation we distinguished her eldest daughter) the Harlequin farce, before she returned to school.

"What is the play?" said I.

"Julius Cæsar," answered Freeling.

I was pleased beyond measure at the idea of seeing this play.

I had been at but three plays in my life, all comedies. I shall never forget the delight I experienced in witnessing that fine scene between Brutus and Cassius where they quarrel, performed by John Kemble and Charles Young! Were I to live to the age of a hundred, I should not forget John Kemble's energetic delivery of those beautiful lines, so finely expressive of virtuous indignation, so rich in eloquence, in force, and in nerve. In short, I, like Mark Antony, being no scholar, can only speak right on, and know not how to praise the poet as he merits. Yet few, perhaps, among the most learned, have in their hearts done more honour to some of the natural beauties of

Shakespeare than I have. I just now alluded to this passage:—

> What, shall one of us,
> That struck the foremost man of all this world
> But for supporting robbers; shall we now,
> Contaminate our fingers with base bribes?
> And sell the mighty share of our large honours,
> For so much trash as may be grasped thus?

Neither was Young's excellent performance of Cassius lost upon me. The feeling manner in which he expressed these lines, brought more tears into my eyes than any love scene, however pathetic, could have done:—

> I that denied thee gold, will give my heart:
> Strike, as thou didst at Cæsar: for I know
> When thou didst hate him worst, thou lov'dst him
> better
> Than ever thou lov'dst Cassius.

I am not sitting down here to write a book of quotations; but I could not help offering my mite of praise to the memory of that great actor, whose likeness I shall never behold again on earth; and such was the impression Kemble made on me, that methinks I hear his accent in my ear, and the very tone of that voice which made my heart thrill so long ago, while he was thus taking leave of Cassius:—

> And whether we shall meet again, I know not;
> Therefore our everlasting farewell take.
> For ever, and for ever, farewell Cassius!
> If we do meet again, why we shall smile;
> If not, why then this parting was well made.

I begged to be excused remaining to see the Harlequin farce, as it would have been impossible for me to have witnessed such an exhibition after Julius Cæsar, and I was allowed to drive home alone, for I insisted on not robbing Fanny of the protection of our worthy general postman.

The next morning I received another visit from Mrs. Porter, who informed me that she had just had an interview with my

new lover, and had reported to him all I had desired her to say.

"Since you object to meet a stranger," continued Mrs. Porter, "His Grace desires me to say, he hopes you can keep a secret, and to inform you, that it is the Duke of Wellington who so anxiously desires to make your acquaintance."

"I have heard of His Grace often," said I, in a tone of deep disappointment: for I had been indulging a kind of hope about the stranger with the great Newfoundland dog, with whose appearance I had been so unusually struck as to have sought for him every day, and I thought of him every hour.

"His Grace," Mrs. Porter proceeded, "only entreats to be allowed to make your acquaintance. His situation, you know, prevents the possibility of his getting regularly introduced to you.'

"It will never do," said I, shaking my head.

"Be assured," said Mrs. Porter, "he is a remarkably fine-looking man, and, if you are afraid of my house, promise to receive him in your own, at any hour when he may be certain to find you alone."

Well, thought I, with a sigh; I suppose he must come. I do not understand economy, and am frightened to death at debts. Argyle is going to Scotland; and I shall want a steady sort of friend, of some kind, in case a bailiff should get hold of me.

"What shall I say to his grace?" Mrs. Porter inquired, growing impatient.

"Well then," said I, "since it must be so, tell His Grace that I will receive him to-morrow at three; but mind, only as a common acquaintance!"

Away winged Wellington's Mercury, as an old woman wings it at sixty; and most punctual to my appointment, at three on the following day, Wellington made his appearance. He bowed first, then said,—

"How do you do?" then thanked me for having given him permission to call on me; and then wanted to take hold of my hand.

"Really," said I, withdrawing my hand, "for such a renowned hero you have very little to say for yourself."

"Beautiful creature!" uttered Wellington, "where is Lorne?"

"Good gracious," said I, out of all patience at his stupidity,—"what come you here for, Duke?"

"Beautiful eyes, yours!" reiterated Wellington.

"Aye, man! they are greater conquerers than ever Wellington shall be; but, to be serious, I understood you came here to try to make yourself agreeable?"

"What, child! do you think that I have nothing better to do than to make speeches to please ladies?" said Wellington.

"*Aprés avoir dépeuplé la terre, vous devez faire tout pour la repeupler,*" I replied.

"You should see me where I shine," Wellington observed, laughing.

"Where's that, in God's name?"

"In a field of battle," answered the hero.

"*Battez-vous, donc, et qu'un autre me fasse la cour!*" said I.

But love scenes, or even love quarrels, seldom tend to amuse the reader, so, to be brief, what was a mere man, even though it were the handsome Duke of Argyle, to a Wellington! ! ! !

Argyle grew jealous of Wellington's frequent visits, and, hiding himself in his native woods, wrote me the following very pathetic letter:

I am not quite sure whether I do or do not love you—I am afraid I did too much;—but, as long as you find pleasure in the society of another, and a hero too, I am well contented to be a mere common mortal, a monkey, or what you will. I too have my heroines waiting for me, in all the woods about here. Here is the wood-cutter's daughter, and the gardener's maid always waiting for my gracious presence, and to which of them I shall throw the handkerchief I know not. How then can I remain constant to your inconstant charms? I could have been a little romantic about you, it is true; but I always take people as I find them, "et j'ai ici beau jeu." Adieu.

I am very fond of you still, for all this.

ARGYLE.

This was my answer:

Indeed you are, as yet, the only man who has ever had the least influence over me, therefore, I entreat you, do not forget me! I wish I were the woodcutter's daughter, awaiting your gracious presence in the woods for days! weeks! months! so that, at last, you would reward me with the benevolent smile of peace and forgiveness; or that illumined, beautiful expression of more ardent feeling, such as I have often inspired and shall remember for ever, come what may, and whether your fancy changes, or mine. You say you take people as you find them; therefore, you must and you shall love me still, with all my imperfections on my foolish head, and that dearly.

HARRIETTE.

Wellington was now my constant visitor:—a most unentertaining one, Heaven knows! and, in the evenings, when he wore his broad red ribbon, he looked very like a rat-catcher.

"Do you know," said I to him one day, "do you know the world talk about hanging you?"

"Eh?" said Wellington.

"They say you will be hanged, in spite of all your brother Wellesley can say in your defence."

"Ha! !" said Wellington, very seriously, "what paper do you read?"

"It is the common talk of the day," I replied.

"They must not work me in such another campaign," Wellington said, smiling, "or my weight will never hang me."

"Why, you look a little like the apothecary in Romeo already," I said.

In my walks Brummell often joined me, and I now walked oftener than usual:—indeed, whenever I could make anybody walk with me; because I wanted to meet the man with his Newfoundland dog, who was not the sort of man, either, that generally strikes the fancy of a very young female;—for he was neither young nor at all gaily dressed. No doubt he was very handsome; but it was that pale expressive beauty, which oftener

steals upon us, by degrees, after having become acquainted, than strikes at first sight.

I had, of late, frequently met him, and he always turned his head back, after he had passed me; but whether he admired, or had, indeed, observed me, or whether he only looked back after his large dog, was what puzzled and tormented me. Better to have been merely observed by that fine noble-looking being, than adored by all the men on earth besides, thought I, being now at the very tip-top of my heroics.

Dean Swift mentions having seen, in the grand academy of Lagado, an ingenious architect, who had contrived a new method of building houses, by beginning at the roof, and working downwards to the foundation; and which he justified by the like practice of those two prudent insects, the bee and the spider. The operation of my love, then, was after the model of this architect. The airy foundation on which I built my castles, caused them ever to descend. Once in my life, when I raised my air-built fabric unusually high, it fell with such a dead weight on my heart, that the very vital spark of existence was nearly destroyed. I have never enjoyed one hour's health since. Now, however, I look on all my past bitter suffering, caused by this same love, which many treat as a plaything and a child, and which I believe to be one of the most arbitrary, ungovernable passions in nature, as a wild dream, remembered by me merely as I recollect three days of delirium, by which I was afflicted after the scarlet fever, with the idea of rats and mice running over my head, and which thus kept me in a frenzy, from the mere working of a disordered brain.

Characters and feelings, unnaturally stretched on the sentimental bed of torture, must return with violence to their natural tone and dimensions, says a celebrated French writer. The idol of romantic passion, in some unlucky moment of common sense, or common life, is discovered to be the last thing their worshippers would wish the idol to be found—a mere human being! with passions, and infirmities, and wants, utterly unprovided for by the statutes of romance. Soon we find, too,

a certain falling off in our own powers of human life, a subjection to common accidents, ill health and indigence, which sicklies o'er the rich colouring of passion with the pale cast of humanity.

But to proceed—if, in my frequent walks about Sloane Street and Hyde Park, I failed to meet the stranger whose whole appearance had so affected my imagination, I was sure to see George Brummell, whose foolish professions of love I could not repeat, for I scarcely heard them. One day, just as I was going to sit down to dinner, with Fanny, and Amy, who was passing the evening with her, I felt a kind of presentiment come over me, that, if I went into Hyde Park at that moment, I should meet this stranger. It was past six o'clock. I had never seen him but at that hour. They both declared that I was mad, and Lord Alvanly calling on Fanny at that moment, they retailed my folly to His Lordship.

"I dare say he is some dog-fancier or whipper-in, or something of the sort," said Alvanly. "God bless my soul! I thought you had more sense. What does Argyle say to all this?"

Lord Lowther now entered the room.

"How very rude you all are," said Fanny. "I have told you frequently, that this is my dinner hour, and you never attend to it!"

"It is those d—m—n grocers, the Mitchells," said Alvanly, "who have taught you to dine at these hours! Who the d—l dines at six? Why, I am just out of bed!"

Lord Lowther made many civil apologies. He wanted to have the pleasure of engaging us three to dine with him on the following day, to meet the Marquis of Hertford, then Lord Yarmouth; a Mr. Graham, the son of Sir James Graham, Bart.; Street, the editor of the *Courier* newspaper; and J. W. Croker, M.P. of the Admiralty.

We accepted the invitation, and Lord Lowther, after begging us not to be later than half past seven, took his leave. Alvanly accompanied me as far as Hyde Park, laughing at me and my man and his dog all the way. The Park was now entirely empty—nothing like a hero, nor even a dog, to be seen.

"I must now wish you good morning," said Alvanly. "I am not going to be groom," he added in my ear.

I shook hands with him, without at all understanding what he meant, and walked down towards that side of the river where I had once or twice seen the stranger coaxing his dog to swim, by throwing stones into the water.

If I could but once see him walking with any man I had ever met before, then, at least, I should have a chance of learning his name. I continued to wander up and down the river, for nearly an hour. As I was returning home disappointed, as usual, I met an elderly gentleman, whose name I forget, though we had often seen each other in society. He stopped to converse with me, on common subjects for a few minutes, and just as he had taken his leave, and was slowly walking his horse away, a very clean, aged woman came up to me and begged assistance. Her manners were unlike those of a common beggar. She smiled on me, and looked as if she would have been nearly as much pleased by a few kind words, as with money.

I always liked very old people, when they were clean and appeared respectable, and I was unusually interested by this woman's demeanour. I eagerly searched my reticule. Alas! it was empty. I turned a wishful eye towards the old gentleman who had left me. His prim seat, on horseback, struck me, altogether, as too formidable. If I knew him a little better, thought I, hesitating, as I saw him stop to speak to his groom. He turned his harsh-looking countenance, at that moment towards me. It will never do, thought I, and then I expressed my sincere regret to the poor old woman, that I had nothing to give her.

"Never mind," replied the good old creature, smiling very kindly on me, "never mind, my dear young lady. Many, I bless God, are more in want than I am."

"Wait here a minute," said I.

My desire to assist her now overcoming my repugnance, I ran as fast as I possibly could after the old gentleman, who was disappearing, and, quite out of breath, and in the deepest

confusion, told him I had forgotten my purse, and had occasion for half a crown, which I hoped he would lend me.

"Certainly, with pleasure," said the old gentleman, drawing out his purse and presenting me with what I had asked for.

I made him many confused apologies; and turning hastily towards some trees, which led, by rather a shorter road, to where I had left the old woman, I came immediately in close contact with the stranger, whose person had been concealed by two large elms, and who might have been observing me for some time. I scarcely dared encourage the flattering idea. It made me wild; and yet, why should such a noble, fashionable-looking man have pulled up his horse between two trees, where there was nothing else to be seen?

After all, I was only encouraging the most absurd vanity, contrary to common sense. Might he not be watching his dog? Did he ever look at me? I know not! After passing days and days in looking for him, his sudden appearance caused such a tremulousness to come over me, that I wanted courage once to raise my eyes to his face; so that I rather felt than knew I was near him, whom now I passed as quickly as my extreme agitation would permit, and soon came up with the old woman, and presenting the half crown, and my card, desired her to call and see me.

The poor old nervous creature shed tears of gratitude, called me a dear, sweet, young lady, assured me that she had kept a respectable inn, for thirty years, at Glasgow, which, from her language, I was inclined to believe, and then took her leave.

I now ventured to turn my head back, believing myself at a safe distance from the stranger. He had quitted his hiding-place, and was slowly walking his very fine horse towards me. There he is, thought I. No one is near us, and yet, in another minute or two, he will have passed me, and be, perhaps, lost to me for ever. I began to muster all the energies of my character, generally fertile in resources, to consider of a remedy for this coming evil. If any man could be bribed to follow him slyly! thought I, hastily looking about me. The stranger drew

nearer. Alas! he will have passed me for ever, perhaps, in another instant. Surely I might have said, with King Richard,

"A horse, a horse! my kingdom for a horse!"

since, without one, who could follow the stranger? I heard the sound of his horse's feet close behind me. I will fix my eyes upon his face, this time, to ascertain if he looks at me, said I to myself with a sudden effort of desperate resolution; which I put in practice the next moment. I thought our eyes met, and that the stranger blushed; but his were so immediately withdrawn from my face, that I went home, still in doubt whether he had, or had not, taken sufficient notice of me even to know me again by sight.

I related this adventure to Fanny, on my return. She gave me some dinner, and advised me, with friendly seriousness, not to make such a fool of myself, about a man I had never spoken to, and who, after all, might turn out to be vulgar, or ill-mannered, or of bad character.

"True," answered I, "and I shall be glad to learn that this man is either of those, for vulgarity will make me heart-whole again in an instant. In short, at any rate, I look for my cure in a future knowledge of this man's character. Nothing is perfect under the sun; and rank, talents, wit, beauty, character, manners, all must combine, in that human being who shall make me die of a broken heart. Therefore I am safe."

"I had not an idea that you were such a simpleton, or half so sentimental," retorted Fanny. "I wonder if I should admire the man!"

"We will try and meet him together," I replied; "but enough of a subject, which begins to make me melancholy, as though he were my fate! How many fine, elegant-looking young men have I not met about the streets, and at the opera, without their making the slightest impression on me. And what do I know of this man, beyond mere beauty of countenance? yet I, think if I could but touch, with my hand, the horse he rode, or the dog he seems so fond of, I should be half wild with joy."

"What incredible nonsense, my dear Harriette," said Fanny.
"But true, upon my word," I replied, "and I cannot help myself."

Fanny shook her head at me, and I left her, to dream of the stranger.

By a little before eight on the following evening, the party, I have before mentioned, all sat down to dinner,at Lord Lowther's in Pall Mall. Lord Yarmouth was at the bottom of the table, opposite to Lord Lowther; Amy, on Lowther's right hand, Fanny at his left; Street, the editor, was her neighbour; and I sat next to Croker. Poor Julia had not been invited. Lord Hertford, who, at his own table, is always particularly entertaining, was a little out of sorts here, which generally happened to him when he dined with Lowther, who gave a very bad dinner.

Lord Hertford very candidly owns that he dislikes a bad dinner; and I had heard him own it so often to Lord Lowther, that I was surprised His Lordship invited him at all, unless he had thought proper to have provided a good one.

The claret, Lowther said, he wanted Lord Hertford's opinion about, having just provided himself with a large quantity of it, in consequence of its quality having been strongly recommended to him.

Our first glass had scarcely gone round, when Lord Hertford said, in his usual loud, odd voice, addressing Lowther, "You asked me for my opinion, and I will give it you; your claret is not worth a d——n."

Poor Lowther looked a little annoyed.

Croker fought on his side. "I must differ in opinion with you, Lord Hertford," said he in, his starched pragmatical manner: "I think the claret excellent."

"With all my heart," said Hertford, in a tone and manner of the most perfect indifference.

"How is your poetical doctor?" Lowther asked me, alluding to my physician, Doctor Nevinson, who, during a serious illness in which he had attended me, had been kind enough to sing my praise in his best rhymes.

I was very earnest in my commendations of that gentleman, believing myself under some obligations to him.

"These doctors are lucky fellows," Croker observed, affectedly.

"Not always," said I. "I have here a few lines poor old Eliot, of the Audit office, made at my house this morning, on Dr. Nevinson's hard case"; and I put into his hand a small bit of paper, out of my reticule.

"What flirtation is going on there, pray, between you two?" inquired Street, who observed me.

"Nothing," I replied, "but a few bad rhymes about Dr. Nevinson."

"Read! read!" exclaimed they all.

Between Lord Lowther's scanty courses there was ever room for reflection, even to madness.

Mr. Secretary Croker read, as follows:

THE PHYSICIAN'S PRAYER TO ÆOLUS

God of the winds, oh! grant my prayer,
And end this solemn frolic;
Or, when I next attend the fair,
Defend them from the cholic.

But if thy brother of the bow
To physic bind me fast,
Grant that the old from me may go,
For cure, to Dr. Last!

Release me from the dry concern
Of listening to their moaning,
And from your votary ever turn
Old dames with cholic groaning!

For patients, oh, to me impart
The gay, the young, the witty;
Such as may interest the heart,
This prayer, oh grant, in pity!

"Allow me to look at them," said Street, as soon as Croker had finished reading.

They were handed to him, and he immediately wrote with his pencil, at the bottom, the following dirty answer:—

Thy poetry, my friend, is very taper;
But pray, for cholic-patients, tear the paper.

Some of the party thought Eliot's verses not so very bad, and all agreed that Street's were most abominably nasty.

"I think Eliot clever," said Hertford. "What has become of him?"

"Oh," replied Amy, "I believe he is going to die! he has grown so very dull and heavy. Do you know, I told him a very interesting story, one day last week, and he did not at all listen to it; and before I had finished repeating it a second time, he fell fast asleep."

"Poor fellow!" said Street, "he could not stand the second edition."

Mr. Graham sat on my left hand, and was as attentive to me as possible. Graham was a beauty; a very Apollo in form, with handsome features, particularly his teeth and eyes; sensible too, and well educated.

"I brought you two together, because I knew you would fall in love with each other," said Lowther.

How impossible, thought I, as the stranger in Hyde Park, as I last saw him, or fancied I saw him blush, crossed my mind. I was not disposed to admire anything else, indeed; but I rather think Graham was pedantic.

He spoke to me, a good deal, of Fred Lamb, with whom he had been travelling on the Continent.

"Fred Lamb has often been jealous of me," said Graham; "but he would be jealous of any man; yet I have always liked Fred, much better than ever he liked me."

"His passion for women is so very violent," I observed, "that somehow or other it disgusted me."

"All ladies are not so refined," replied Graham, laughing.

"Perhaps not," answered I; "perhaps I may not be so refined, when I like my man better."

Street was, all this time, making hard love to Fanny. Poor Street, though a very pleasant man, is, as he knows, a very ugly one. Fanny's extreme good nature was always a Refuge for the Destitute. If ever there was a lame, a deaf, a blind, or an ugly man in our society, Fanny invariably made up to that man immediately, to put him in countenance. Nay, she would, I believe, have made up to the Duke of Devonshire, blind, deaf, absent and all, had he fallen in her way.

At this moment my ear caught the word cruel, as applied to Fanny by Street.

"Quite the reverse, Fanny is all goodness," I exclaimed.

"Yes," rejoined Street, "as far as words go."

"It is you, Mr. Street, who cruelly neglect me, on the contrary," said Fanny laughing.

"Never!" answered Street, laying his hand on his heart.

"Then why did you not call at the oil-shop?" Fanny asked; alluding to the place where she had formerly been lodging for a short time, in Park Street, and to which she had invited Street.

"Wounded pride!" observed Street.

"She would have poured oil into your wounds," said Lord Hertford.

"I'll thank you to pass me another bottle of this bad claret," squeaked out Croker, "for I must be candid enough to say that I like it much."

"I won't abuse it again," Lord Hertford observed, "for fear you should get drunk."

I now grew tired of waiting for Amy to make a first move, and began to think she was ill disposed, in the humility of her heart, to take upon her the privilege of eldest sister; so I made it for her, and we retired to Lowther's drawing-room, from which we took a peep into his dressing-room, where we found a set of vile, dirty combs, brushes, towels and dressing gowns. Lowther, who always has a pain in his liver, and knows not how to take kindly to his bottle, entered his apartment, just as we were loudest in our exclamations of horror and dismay, as these said dirty objects offered themselves to our view.

"For heaven's sake," said Amy, with whom Lowther was certainly in love, "do turn away your valet, and burn these nasty dirty brushes and things."

"It will be no use, I believe," replied Lowther; "for every valet will copy his master."

"What! then," exclaimed Amy, "you admit the master is dirty?"

Lowther feared he must plead guilty.

"I am very glad I ran away from you," retorted Amy, who had gone with him into the country, and afterwards cut him because he did not ask for a separate dressing-room at the inns on the road.

The other gentlemen soon joined us in the drawing-room, drank their coffee, and then we were all off to the opera.

I had the honour of taking Mr. Graham there in my carriage, with Fanny. Amy went with Lord Lowther.

We found Julia in our private box, alone and half asleep, dressed very elegantly; and, in my opinion, looking very interesting and well.

"What, alone?" said I. "Why do not you make the men more civil?" and I introduced her to that most fresh and juicy-looking large beauty, young Graham.

Julia had lately got nearly to the bottom of her heroics with Cotton. She was ashamed to admit the idea, even to herself; she never would own it to me: but the fact was, she was tired of Cotton, and dying, and sighing, and longing secretly for something new. Young and beautiful, her passions, like those of a man, were violent and changeable; in addition to which, she had lately suffered every possible indignity and inconvenience which debts and duns could inflict; besides, Fanny and I, who knew that Mr. Cotton had a wife and large family at home, had laboured with all our hearts to disgust Julia with Cotton, believing that it would be for the good of both that they separated for ever. Cotton had not a shilling to spare for the support of Julia's children; and Julia's *accouchements* took place regularly once in eleven months. She had often vainly applied

to her parents, as well as to her uncle, Lord Carysfort, who only wrote to load her with reproaches.

As soon as Graham had left us, Julia expressed her admiration of him in very warm terms.

"He has no money," said Fanny; "besides, I can see that he is making up to Harriette. Do, my dear Julia, consider all your beautiful children; and, if you can leave Cotton to his poor wife, and must form another connexion, let it be with someone who can contribute to the support of your young family."

Julia assured us she was, at that moment, actually in expectation of being arrested; and she entreated that Fanny or I would make an application to some of her noble relations, which she promised to do.

This point being decided, she again talked of Graham's beauty, wondered where he was, and anxiously inquired whether I was sure that he had taken a fancy for me?

"Not a bit sure," I replied. "I know nothing at all of the matter, neither do I care."

Fanny then related all about my last meeting with my stranger and his dog, to Julia, who seemed to understand my sensations much better than Fanny did.

"Oh, *mon Dieu!*" interrupted I, "there is, in that box next to Lady Foley's, a man—no, it is still handsomer than my stranger! and yet—(the stranger turned his head towards our side of the house)—Oh!" continued I, taking hold of Fanny's hand in a fit of rapture, "it is he! only his hat, till now, concealed that beautiful head of hair."

"Where? where?" cried out they both at once.

"Oh! that someone would come into our box, now, and tell us who he is!" I exclaimed.

"How provoking you are," said Julia. "Why do not you point out the man to us?"

"It is that man who is laughing. Oh! I had no idea that his teeth were so very beautiful!"

"Dear me, how tiresome," observed Fanny, quietly. "If you will not tell us which is your man, let us talk of something else."

"He is there," replied I, "next to Lady Foley's box, leaning on his arm."

Julia put her glass to her eye, as usual; being remarkably shortsighted, she could distinguish nothing without it.

"I know him," said Julia, after gazing on him for some time.

"Not much?" I observed, almost breathless. "Did you ever speak to him?"

"I have met him in society, when I was a girl," continued Julia; "but I was intimate with a girl to whom, when young, he proposed. Her wedding clothes were made; she used to sleep in my room, with his picture round her neck. She adored him beyond all that could be imagined of love and devotion, and, within a few days of their proposed marriage, he declared off. His excuse was that his father refused his consent.

"For many years," continued Julia, "my friend's sufferings were severe; her parents trembled for her reason. No one was permitted to name her former lover in her presence. She is now Lady Conyngham."

"And his name?" said I.

"Lord Ponsonby, who is supposed to be the handsomest man in England: but he must now be forty, if not more," replied Julia.

"I wish he were sixty," I answered. "As it is, I have no chance: but, indeed, I never thought I had. He is a sort of man I think I could be wicked enough to say my prayers to. I could live in his happiness only, without his knowing me. I could wait for hours near his house, for the chance of seeing him pass, or hearing his voice."

Fanny laughed outright.

Julia only exclaimed, "Well done, Harriette! You are more romantic than ever I was at your age, and I thought that was impossible."

"You did not love Lord Ponsonby," retorted I.

"True," said Julia: "badinage apart, Ponsonby is, as I have always been told, very near perfection. But what chance can you have? He is married to the loveliest creature on earth—the youngest daughter of Lord Jersey."

"I knew very well," sighed I, despondingly, "before I heard of his marriage, that I should never be anything to him."

"I will tell you where he lives," said Julia. "It is in Curzon Street, Mayfair."

"Well then," thought I, "at least when he passes me I shall not, as yesterday, fancy I am looking at him for the last time."

Upon the whole, my spirits were violently elated this evening. Lord Ponsonby, I believe, did not perceive me. I was most anxious, yet afraid to see his wife.

"I cannot find her box," observed Julia, "else I should know her immediately."

We now lost sight of His Lordship for some time, he having left the box I first saw him in. I perceived him, for an instant, afterwards, but missed him altogether before the opera was over.

"I am glad I have not seen his wife," said I, after we were seated in the carriage. "I hope I shall never see her as long as I live."

I resolved, now, to make no kind of advances to become acquainted with Lord Ponsonby; but, on the very next evening, I indulged myself in passing his house at least fifty times. I saw and examined the countenances of his footmen, and the colour of his window-curtains: even the knocker of his door escaped not my veneration, since Lord Ponsonby must have touched it so often. My very nature seemed now to have undergone a change. I began to dislike society, and considered the unfortunate situation I had fallen into, with horror, because I fancied Lord Ponsonby would despise me. I often reflected whether there might yet be some mighty virtue in my power, some sacrifice of self, some exertion of energy, by which I might, one day, deserve to be respected, or to have my memory respected by Lord Ponsonby after, I was dead.

The fact is, I really now lived but in his sight, and I only met him once or twice in a week, to see him pass me without notice. At last I began to believe he really did see me in the park, with pleasure, when, by any accident, late in the evening, I happened

to be alone, and the park empty. Once he rode behind me, to my very door, and passed it, without seeming to look at me: the dread of being by him accused of boldness, ever prevented my observation.

This day, on entering my house, I mounted hastily up into my garret, and got out upon the leads, there to watch if Lord Ponsonby turned back, or whether he had merely followed me by accident, on his way somewhere else. He rode on, almost as far as I could see, and then turned back again, and galloped hastily by my door, as though afraid of being observed by me.

Suppose he were to love me! thought I, and the idea caused my heart to beat wildly. I would not dwell upon it. It was ridiculous. It would only expose me to after-disappointment. What was I, that Lord Ponsonby should think about me? What could I ever be to him? Still there was no reason, which I could discover, why I might not love Lord Ponsonby. I was made for love, and I looked for no return. I should have liked him to have been assured that for the rest of his life mine was devoted to him. In short, though I scarcely ventured to admit it, hope did begin to predominate. I was young, and my wishes had, hitherto, rarely been suppressed by disappointment.

My reflections were interrupted by my servant, who brought me a letter from George Brummell, full of nonsensical vows and professions. "When," he wrote, "beautiful Harriette, will you admit me into your house? Why so obstinately refuse my visits? Tell me, I do entreat you, when I may but throw myself at your feet, without fear of derision from a public homage on the pavement, or dislocation from the passing hackney coaches!" The rest I have forgotten.

Wellington called on me, the next morning before I had finished my breakfast. I tried him on every subject I could muster. On all, he was most impenetrably taciturn. At last he started an original idea of his own; actual copyright, as Stockdale would call it.

"I wonder you do not get married, Harriette!"

(By-the-bye, ignorant people are always wondering.)

"Why so?"

Wellington, however, gives no reason for anything unconnected with fighting, at least since the convention of Cintra; and he, therefore, again became silent. Another burst of attic sentiment blazed forth.

"I was thinking of you last night, after I got into bed," resumed Wellington.

"How very polite to the Duchess," I observed. "*Apropos* to marriage, Duke, how do you like it?"

Wellington, who seems to make a point of never answering one, continued, "I was thinking—I was thinking that you will get into some scrape, when I go to Spain."

"Nothing so serious as marriage neither, I hope!"

"I must come again to-morrow, to give you a little advice," continued Wellington.

"O let us have it all out now, and have done with it."

"I cannot," said Wellington, putting on his gloves and taking a hasty leave of me.

I am glad he is off, thought I, for this is indeed very up-hill work. This is worse than Lord Craven.

As soon as he was gone, I hastened to Curzon Street. The window-shutters of Lord Ponsonby's house were all closed: How disappointed and low-spirited I felt at the idea that His Lordship had left town! Suspense was insufferable; so I ventured to send my servant to inquire when the family were expected in London.

In about a month, was the answer. I must forget this man, thought I, it is far too great a bore: and yet I felt that to forget him was impossible.

Things went on in the same way, for a week or two. Amy had closed with Mr. Sydenham's proposal, and changed her name to that of Mrs. Sydenham. She called on Fanny, one morning, when her drawing-room was half full of beaux.

"Beautiful Amy, how do you do?" said Nugent, with that eternal smile of his! It is so vulgar to be always looking joyful and full of glee, I cannot think what he can mean by it.

"Oh," said Amy, withdrawing her hand, "I must never flirt, nor have any beaux again."

"A-a-my! A-a-my! will that feel nice?" said I, in humble imitation of Mr. Hart Davis, M.P.

"I must now lead a pure, virtuous, chaste, and proper life," proceeded Amy.

"Who has laid such an appalling embargo on you?" I asked.

"Why, do not you know that Sydenham and I are become man and wife? and that I have changed my name and my home for his?"

"Alas, poor Beckendorff!" I ejaculated. "But, Amy, had we not better write a twopenny-post letter to your god, Ponsonby, requesting him to have the goodness not to go into Mr. Sydenham's bed, when you are absent?"

"Oh, pray do!" said Amy.

"O, you funny, comical creature!" exclaimed laughing Nugent, in answer to some immaterial observation of mine.

"Mr. Nugent, it is really very provoking, that you will always look so happy! What you see in this stupid world to make you so, I cannot understand: it is quite tiresome."

"Why not make the best of it?" said Nugent, still laughing.

"And cannot you make the best of it, without looking thus ever in full glee?"

"It is very shocking!" said Luttrell, with a face like a Spitalfields weaver.

After wishing Mrs. Sydenham joy, I took my leave. On reaching home, I found young Freeling in my drawing-room, waiting to pay his respects to me.

I began to think I had scarcely done this young man justice, he appeared so very humble, quiet, and amiable. He blushed exceedingly when I addressed him, but—never mind the vanity—it proceeded more from a sort of respectful growing passion towards me, than as I had at first imagined, from *mauvaise honte*.

Freeling was not fashionable, as I have said before; but I must add, that I believe even his enemy could say nothing worse of him.

"I will not deceive you," said I to him one day, seeing he was inclined to follow the thing up steadily, under the impression, perhaps, that faint heart never won fair lady. "Some women would make use of your attentions, your money, and your private boxes, as long as possible; but I will say this of myself, I know there is not much to be said in my favour, I never do what I feel to be ungenerous or wrong. I shall receive you with pleasure, as a friend, at any time; but if you were to sit down and sigh for a twelvemonth, you would never get any further. No speeches now! You are an interesting young man, whom thousands of amiable women would like, and life is short. *L'amour ne se commande pas*, perhaps you are going to tell me; and my answer is, that I am sure it cannot long survive hope, and for you, indeed there is none."

Freeling blushed and looked melancholy and undecided.

"Shake hands and forgive me," said I, "*Allons. Un peu de philosophie, mon ami. Que vaut la belle qui détourne la bouche?* How ridiculous a fine, tall, well-looking young man like you will appear, sitting under one of the willow-trees in the Green Park!"

Freeling smiled.

"There now, I see it is over already," I continued, and changed the subject, which Freeling had the good sense and good taste never to renew; and what is more, the good heart to take an opportunity of doing me a very essential service, some months afterwards, when I believed he had forgotten me altogether.

And pray, madam, the reader may ask, how came you to be such a monster, as to call this kind, generous-hearted man a bore and a general postman, some time ago?

I do not know, I am sure; I really am very sorry for it now; but then the book never will be finished, if I am to stop to make corrections and alterations; moreover, Stockdale has run away with that part of my manuscript: so to proceed——

Some short time after this mighty elopement, the Duke of Wellington, who, I presume, had discovered the tough qualities

of his heart, which contributed to obtain him such renown in the field of battle, possessed no more merit for home service, or ladies' uses, than did his good digestion, betook himself again to the wars. He called to take a hasty leave of me, a few hours before his departure.

"I am off for Spain directly," said Wellington.

I know not how it was, but I grew melancholy. Wellington had relieved me from many duns, which else had given me vast uneasiness. I saw him there, perhaps for the last time in my life. Ponsonby was nothing to me, and out of town; in fact, I had been in bad spirits all the morning, and strange, but very true, and he remembers it still, when I was about to say, God bless you, Wellington! I burst into tears. They appeared to afford rather an unusual unction to his soul, and his astonishment seemed to me not quite unmixed with gratitude.

"If you change your home," said Wellington, kissing my cheek, "let me find your address at Thomas's Hotel, as soon as I come to England; and, if you want anything in the meantime, write to Spain; and do not cry; and take care of yourself; and do not cut me when I come back.

"Do you hear?" said Wellington, first wiping away some of my tears with my handkerchief; and then, kissing my eyes, he said, "God bless you!" and hurried away.

Argyle continued to correspond with me; but, if one might judge from the altered style of his letters, Wellington had made a breach in His Grace's late romantic sentiments in my favour. Breach-making was Wellington's trade, you know: and little as men of Argyle's nation might be expected to care about breeches, yet, the idea of Wellington often made me sigh; and sometimes he whistled; which, with Argyle; was just the same thing.

I forgot to mention that, on the day after I met a certain great man, at Julia's house, my servant informed me a gentleman in the parlour desired to speak to me.

"Why do not you bring his name?" said I.

"The gentleman says, it does not signify," was my footman's answer.

"Go and tell him that I think it does signify; and that I will not receive people who are ashamed either of me, or themselves."

The man hesitated.

"Stay," said I, "I will put it down for you," and I wrote what I had said on a bit of paper.

My servant brought me back the paper, on the blank side of which was written, with a pencil, one word.

I sent it down again, with these words written underneath the word, on purpose to put him in a passion: *Don't know anybody in that shire.*

The servant returned once more, with one of His Lordship's printed cards, assuring me the gentleman in the parlour was walking about in a great passion.

I desired him to be shewed upstairs, and, when he entered, I stood up, as though waiting to hear why he intruded on me.

"I believe, madam," said His Lordship, "some apology is due to you, from me."

"Are you going to tell me that you were tipsy, when you last did me the favour to mistake my house for an inn, or something worse?"

"No! certainly not," answered the peer.

"Were you quite sober?"

"Perfectly."

"Then your late conduct admits of no apology, and you could offer none which would not humble and greatly wound my pride, to avoid which, I must take the liberty of wishing you a good morning."

I then rang my bell and left him.

CHAPTER IV

More than a month had now elapsed since Lord Ponsonby left London, and I perceived no signs of his return. Yet I never forgot him, although half the fine young men in town were trying to please me. Amy continued to give her parties; but soberly: that is to say, Sydenham insisted on having his house quiet before three in the morning. One evening, when Fanny and Julia dined with me, I got up from my table to open my window, and I saw Lord Ponsonby, who was slowly riding by my house, with his face turned towards my window. This time there could be no doubt as to his blushing. My happiness was now of a nature too pure to be trifled with, and I know I could not endure to have it intruded on by any commonplace remarks. I kept his appearance, therefore, a profound secret: although I found it the most difficult thing possible, to talk on any other subject. I thought these women never would have left me. They took their leave, however, at last; but not till near twelve o'clock.

I could not sleep a wink all night! At nine the next morning I rang my bell, being quite worn out with attempting it. My maid entered my room, with a letter which had just arrived by the twopenny-post. It was as follows:

I have long been very desirous to make your acquaintance: will you let me? A friend of mine has told me something about you; but I am afraid you were then only laughing at me; "et il se peut, qu'un homme passe, ne sait bon que pour cela!" *I hope, at all events, that you will write me one line, to say you forgive me, and direct it to my house in town.*

P.

I will not attempt to describe all I felt, on the receipt of this first epistle from Lord Ponsonby. I am now astonished at that infatuation, which could render a girl, like me, possessed, certainly, of a very feeling, affectionate heart, thus thoughtless, and careless of the fate of another: and that other a young, innocent and lovely wife! Had anybody reminded me that I was now about to inflict, perhaps, the deepest wound in the breast of an innocent wife, I hope and believe I should have stopped there; and then what pain and bitter anguish I had been spared; but I declare to my reader, that Lady Fanny Ponsonby never once entered my head.

I had seen little or nothing of the world, I never possessed a really wise friend, to set me right, advise or admonish me. My mother had ever seemed happiest in my father's absence, nor did she vex or trouble herself to watch his steps; and I did not know, or at all events, I did not think, my making Lord Ponsonby's acquaintance would be likely to injure any one of my fellow-creatures; or I am sure such a reflection must have embittered that pure state of happiness I now enjoyed.

This was my answer to Lord Ponsonby's letter:

For the last five months, I have scarcely lived but in your sight, and everything I have done or wished, or hoped, or thought about, has had a reference to you and your happiness. Now tell me what you wish.

HARRIETTE.

Reply:

I fancy, though we never met, that you and I are, in fact, acquainted, and understand each other perfectly. If I do not affect to disbelieve you, you will not say I am vain; and, when I tell you that we cannot meet immediately, owing to a very severe domestic calamity, you will not say I am cold. In the meantime will you write to me? The little watch I have got for you, I am not quite satisfied with. I have seen one in better taste, and flatter. But my poor father is dying, and counts the minutes of my

absence, or I could have found one to please you. However, you will keep this for my sake. I will leave it myself at your house this evening. I can scarcely describe to you how exhausted I am; for I have passed the whole of the three last nights, by the bedside of my sick father, without rest. I know he will have your prayers. At midnight, let us pray for him together. He has been suffering more than five months. Adieu, dear Harriette.

Lord Ponsonby's solitary rides, with his dog, his paleness, and that melancholy expression of countenance which, at once interested me so deeply, were now accounted for. During three weeks more, we corresponded daily. His father continued to exist, and that was all. I learned from His Lordship's letters, that, on the night we saw him for a few moments at the opera, his father was pronounced out of danger, and country air was recommended to him, which, having produced no favourable change, nothing now could save him. My happiness, while that correspondence went on, was the purest, the most exalted, and the least allied to sensuality, of any I ever experienced in my life. Ponsonby, I conceived, was now mine, by right; mine by that firm courage which made me feel ready to endure any imaginable evil for his sake. I was morally certain that nothing in existence could love Lord Ponsonby, or could feel the might and majesty of his peculiarly intellectual beauty, as I did.

My beloved, so he wrote to me at last, *my spirits and health fail me; they are worn out and exhausted with this close confinement. My poor father no longer suffers, or is scarcely sensible. My brother George will take my place by his bedside. Let us meet this evening, and you will console me. I shall go to you at nine.*

Lord Ponsonby was then coming to me at last! I began to fear the expression of his eyes, so penetrating, so very bright, I began to think myself under the influence of a dream, and that he was not coming; then I feared sudden death would deprive me of him. I heard the knock, and his footsteps, on the stairs; and then that most godlike head uncovered, that countenance so pale, so still, and so expressive, the mouth of such perfect

loveliness; the fine clear, transparent, dark skin. I looked earnestly in his face, I watched for that characteristic blush which made me fancy his body thought, to be certain of my own happiness! and then my overflowing heart was relieved by a flood of tears.

"My dear, dear little Harriette," said Ponsonby, drawing me towards him, and passing his arm softly round my waist, "let us be happy now we are met." My smile must have been expressive of the most heartfelt felicity; yet our happiness was of that tranquil nature, which is nearer allied to melancholy than to mirth. We conversed together all night, with my head resting on his breast. An age could not have made us better acquainted! Ponsonby's health and spirits were, evidently, quite exhausted by anxiety and want of rest. Neither of us desired anything, while thus calmly engaged in conversation. Yes, perhaps I did, as my eyes were fixed, for hours, on his beautiful and magnificent countenance, feel my own lips almost tremble, as I thought they would be pressed to his, and Ponsonby seemed to understand and feel my wishes, for he said, in answer to nothing but the expression of my eyes:—

"No, not to-night! I could not bear your kiss to-night. We will dream about it till to-morrow."

Ponsonby assured me, in the course of our *tête à tête*, that the first time he had seen me, was one day when I lived at Somers'-town, two years before. For three or four days after that, he could think of nothing else. He met me with Argyle again, and wished to forget me; "but," added he, "I, being the shyest poor wretch in the world, have ever held anything like notoriety in the greatest dread. I abhor it! therefore, when you came out at the opera, and I heard all the fine young men talking about you, it was not so difficult to forget you; and yet, though you did not see me, I was always looking at you, and trying to hear someone talk about you. When we met, latterly, in the Park, there was something so natural and unaffected, and wild, about your manner, that I began to forget your notoriety."

Ponsonby then told me all about the poor old woman to whom

I had given half a crown in the Park; but what he said on that head was far too flattering for me to repeat. It was past five in the morning when we separated.

"You are so ill and fatigued," said I, "dear Ponsonby, that I will not let you come to me to-morrow night."

"Oh, but I must!" answered Ponsonby.

"Indeed you must rest."

"Impossible!" he replied.

We made no professions of love to each other—not one; for we were as certain, as of our existence, that we were mutually adored; and yet we passed the night together, and parted, without a kiss, to meet early the following evening.

Heavy work, ma'am, all this love and stuff, says my fair reader of sixty, taking off her spectacles,—for we are always fair, —and my young reader does not like playing second fiddle, which is my own reason for hating novels.

Examinez votre propre cœur, et vous pouvez, en quelque sorte, connâitre les hommes, says Voltaire, or La Bruyère, or somebody else.

Well, ladies, I wanted to leave out this love of mine, altogether, and had done so, but that my *little* editor insisted on the love, above all things. Nevertheless I will make shorter of our second night.

I have one advantage over other bad female writers and prosing ladies, which is, that I do not think myself agreeable. Now there are many ladies, virtuous ladies too, to whom it is my duty and my wish to look up, who really are enough to kill one, in that way; and, though out of the high veneration in which I hold virtue, *à la distance*, I have never in my whole life, presumed to intrude my unworthy society on any one immaculate female, yet it is astonishing what a knack they have always had, of intruding themselves upon me. I remember I had the whole family of the Pitchers on my back at once, whether I would or not, some time ago, when I went down to study Voltaire, and Roman history, by myself, for a week or two at Salt Hill; nor could I, in any way, get rid of their pressing

invitations to visit them in town, without the humiliating confession of all my sins! It surely was disagreeable, and hardly fair, that such errors should be extorted from a person like me, who has ever had plenty of people to abuse her, without abusing herself.

I hit upon a new plan for getting rid of Mrs. Nesbit, a certain widow lady, now living with her family at Versailles, a relation, I believe, of Lord Bathurst. I will tell you all about it. My being thrown into her honourable society was a mere accident, and I was well disposed to keep my distance, and talk only to the male part of our company. Mrs. Nesbit not only put herself forward, and took an active part in our conversation, but she called me, My dear, took me aside, and declared that she had taken a great fancy to me; hoped we should meet in town; detailed to me all the beauties of her young family; and further, to prove her unreserved friendship, took me out of the society of some very pleasant young men, into a cold, dirty, bedroom, where she acquainted me with an affliction which had befallen that part of her person, which made it impossible for her to sit down without torture. I was very sorry, and duly condoled with her, of course; but I never saw the lady in my life before, and, if I had, how could I help her tremendous boils, or their very critical situation! I expressed my unfeigned surprise at her temerity in having ventured out in her present misery, instead of reclining on her sofa at home, and concluded with strongly recommending her recurrence to the horizontal position.

"Oh, my dear," said Mrs. Nesbit, "it is absolutely shocking! I have brought you up here on purpose to shew it you."

I began to declare off altogether, earnestly remarking that, really, since my examining the part affected could do it no manner of good, I saw no necessity for so ungainly an exhibition.

"Oh, my love, I have taken a great liking to you," rejoined Mrs. Nesbit, "and therefore, I particularly wish you to see it," —suiting the action to the word.

It was just before our dinner, and I lost not a moment to declare myself satisfied with the unctuous and glowing spectacle.

"It is very bad, indeed, madam; had you not better cover it up?"

But she insisted on my luxuriating in the fullest view!

I am not modest, as this woman is, thought I, according to the world's acceptation of that word, and yet I could not, I am sure, do this, even with my own sister!

We soon returned to the dining-room, where I set my wits to work, how best and soonest to destroy Mrs. Nesbit's so rapidly-matured friendship for me.

At dinner she talked politics: I suppose because she was past forty, and virtuous, and related to a noble politician. Surely she cannot be the late George Rose's diplomatic favourite, with a beautiful leg!

She argued against the late Marquis of Londonderry.

I strove to enter into the subject, as well as I could, with a view to defend the man I have always liked, and greatly respected. Perhaps this will do, thought I; but it only subjected me to a long lecture, interrupted, every instant, with,—My dear, I tell you thus candidly of your faults, because I am your sincere well-wisher, take the warning of a friend; and then she released me, to attack a gay young man, who had spoken a little too hastily to a servant, with everything most common-place and least affecting, in the shape of remonstrance, such as, why be so impetuous? civil words surely cost nothing—hoped he would not take it ill—was really sorry, etc., and all the while she was pinching me to death, to remind me of her sore b——m.

What shall I do to disgust her? thought I; for we were a large party, travelling on the Continent together; and I saw myself what is vulgarly called in for it.

I listened to her conversation, eagerly attending to her antipathies, in order that I might practise some of them upon her directly, as if by mere accident. At last I got her from politics, to lecture on decorum. She mentioned her friend, Lady Emily Stuart, the English ambassador's wife at Paris. She had been under the necessity of refusing that lady's invitation to see masks at the carnival; because Lady Aldborough was invited.

"I told my Lady Emily, frankly," continued Mrs. Nesbit, "that as a mother, and one who, I thanked God, had hitherto contrived to escape censure,—(Mrs. Nesbit must have been, even in her youth, extremely plain)—by the strictest adherence to propriety, even in its slightest forms."

This was a temptation too great for me to contend with.

"What could it signify," observed I, carelessly, delighted at the prospect of getting off so much easier than with the warm-hearted, friendly Pitchers.

"Signify!" reiterated Mrs. Nesbit, with astonishment.

"Aye," said I, yawning; "point me out anyone, man or woman, to whom all this could possibly signify a straw!"

"I do not understand you, madam!" said Mrs. Nesbit.

"Why, who cared?" said I, impatiently.

"Who cared! ! !" echoed she.

"Yes, who cared," repeated I. "Can you bring forward one person, in the whole wide world, who did care, does care, or will ever care hereafter, how many forms you missed, and how many you observed?—For my part," I added, seeing Mrs. Nesbit's eyes distended, and mouth wide open, in astonishment, and, resolving to make short work of it, to avoid the favour of a second exhibition, which I could ill have endured immediately after my dinner—so taking my little fur travelling-cap off my head, and twisting it into the form and appearance of a hare, in presence of all the party, for which I dare say, my reader will think that I ought to have been excommunicated, and in which act I did blush, but only consider the emergency!—"For my part, I hate forms of all sorts, and most particularly the form of this cap." Then, putting it on a clean plate, after I had really made it look like a hare, I asked the waiter, in French, if he had any current jelly?

"I must leave the table," cried Mrs. Nesbit, reddening. "For shame! !" and, seizing my poor cap, she threw it wrathfully to the other end of a dirty, sandy French room.

I was now in an unfeigned passion myself. Since it was a public table, I thought the virtuous Mrs. Nesbit had no excuse

for throwing my new cap into the sand. The handsome young man on the other side, whom she had been lecturing into a fever, jumped up, and, after wiping off the sand, presented me my cap, laughing, but respectfully saying he hoped it was not dirtied.

I am not the meekest creature on earth, nor quite as easily led, as my sister, Lady Berwick, so I carefully again made a hare of my cap, which I once more replaced in the plate, while everybody was laughing, saying, "Take care of your Indian shawl, Mrs. Nesbit, the next time you meddle with my new cap, unless you are fond of French expectorations and French sand."

"I must leave the table then!" said Mrs. Nesbit, with a countenance of dreadfully gathering rage.

"I have just been recommending a more horizontal position to you, madam, *et pour cause*, *vous savez*," and then added, in her ear, although there was not a person at table who understood a word of English (it was at Amiens), "I am puzzled to guess, with such a nice sense of propriety and love of decorum, how, you came to shew me, an utter stranger, your bum-fiddle!"

"This," said Mrs. Nesbit, rising to leave the room, with as dignified and reserved an air as if she had done no such thing, "this shall be a lesson to me against forming hasty friendships."

"Or shewing your bum-fiddle," I added, laughing, which remark did not in the least alter, or affect her majestic, and truly dramatic manner of making her exit from the room.

SECOND NIGHT'S ENTERTAINMENT:

Not Arabian, but Irish, and that is better. At nine o'clock on the following evening, Ponsonby entered the room, an altered man. He was one of the very few persons I have met with in my life, who, from the natural, extreme reserve and shyness of their disposition, absolutely required to be a very little tipsy, before they can give their brilliant imaginations fair play. Ponsonby had slept, drank a little more claret, and what, lately had been unusual to him, owing to his father's lingering illness, had put on an evening dress. He appeared now so much more

beautiful than I had ever imagined any mortal mixture of earth's clay, that I began to lose my confidence in myself, and tremble. There was, too, a look of success about him, for indeed the humblest man on earth must have borrowed courage from the reflection of Ponsonby's looking glass on that evening: and there he sat, for half an hour, laughing, and shewing his brilliant teeth, while he related to me many witty things, which had been said by his uncle whom he had just left—the George Ponsonby, now no more, who spoke so well on the opposition side.

Can one endure this any longer, thought I. I was getting into a fever. Perhaps he does not love me.

"You are so proud of being dressed to-night!" I remarked with some drollery, and I thought he never would have ceased laughing at me.

It was very tiresome.

"The fact is," said Ponsonby, in his sweet voice, the beauteous tones of which nobody ever did or will dispute, "the fact is, I really am proud of it; for I have not worn shoes before, for these last three months; but," added he, "do you know what I am most proud of in the world, and which, poor as I am, upon my honour, I would not exchange at this moment, for a hundred thousand pounds?"

"No!——"

"I will tell you,—my place in your heart, and your arms, this evening." He put his arms round my waist, and my lips were nearly touching his. Ponsonby's cheek was now tinged with the glowing blush of passion; yet he turned from my kiss, like a spoiled child.

"No!" said Ponsonby, shaking his head, "I have a thousand things to tell you."

"I cannot listen to one of them," said I, faintly, and our lips met in one long, long delicious kiss! so sweet, so ardent! that it seemed to draw the life's warm current from my youthful heart, to reanimate his with all its wildest passion.

And then!—yes, and then, as Sterne says,——

And then,—and then,—and then,—and then,—and then we parted.

The next day, at past three o'clock, Fanny found me in bed.

"How abominably idle!" said Fanny.

I answered, that I was not well.

"You do not look very bad," Fanny replied, "on the contrary, I have not seen you look so well, nor your eyes so bright, for some time."

"Well," said I, "if you really think me out of danger, I will get up."

"Come!" answered Fanny, "shall I ring for your maid? I want you to take me to Julia's."

While I was dressing, Fanny informed me that she had given up her own house, to go and live with Julia.

"I rather prefer living alone," she continued, "but Julia is so very dull, and my paying half her rent will also be of service to her."

"And some of your beaux may, perhaps, be brought to flirt with her, poor thing!" added I, "for really their neglect is very hard upon her." Much more beauty, it should seem, is required to please without virtue than with it, since it is said that Julia, at her mamma's, made conquests everywhere and every hour. Even the Regent himself once said, he would travel a hundred miles to have the pleasure of seeing her dance.

Her dancing, we both agreed, was perfection: speaking of what was most truly graceful, effeminate and lady-like.

"Brummell has been with her, making strong love lately," said Fanny.

"Oh, the shocking deceiver! Tell Julia not to believe one word he says."

I inquired how Amy and Sydenham went on.

"Pretty well," answered Fanny. "Sydenham is not only a very good-natured, but a remarkably clever and well-bred man. Amy tries his patience too, a little, with his passion for books; she is always taking them out of his hand, and making him look at her attitudes before the glass, or her attempts at the shawl-dance."

"What does Sydenham do for the Marquess of Wellesley?" I asked.

"Everything, I believe," Fanny replied. "He appears to write all his letters and papers, in the shape of business; and so, I believe, he did in India; but I know that Wellesley does nothing except by his advice."

"Pray does Lord Wellesley make his love too, as well as his reputation, by proxy?"

"I do not know," answered Fanny, laughing, "although I believe he passed a good deal of his time, formerly, with the lady they call Mrs. Moll Raffles" (as Fanny designated her, in her zeal to be civil).

"I never saw anybody in such spirits as you to-day," Fanny remarked to me, when we got into the carriage. "I am afraid there is some mischief in the wind. What has become of Lord Ponsonby?"

I was too happy to talk about it, so I contrived to change the subject. "Where shall I take you to?" I inquired.

"To Julia's, where I am now settled. I went there yesterday," was Fanny's answer.

"This world is really made to be laughed at," said Fanny, suddenly leaning her head out of the carriage window.

"What is the matter?" I asked.

"That man," said Fanny, "with his grave face, and his large board hoisted up, standing there challenging the world, as if he were Don Quixote come to life again."

"What for?" said I.

"Bayley's Blacking. Can one conceive anything so absurd?"

I set her down, as desired, and begged her to make my excuse to Julia, who was at her window with Horace Beckford, the handsome nephew of Lord Rivers. He appeared inclined to pay her attention, if one might judge by the soft smile which was playing about his features: but then he was eternally smiling.

I found my very constant and steady admirer, Lord Frederick Bentinck, waiting for me, prepared, as usual, to give me a world

of advice. He told me that I was going on in a very bad way, and asked me whither I expected to go?

"Where are you going to?" said I, as he walked into my dressing-room, and seemed to admire himself in my large glass.

"I am going to see the Duchess of York," said Fred Bentinck.

"What of that?" I returned. "Where are your gloves?"

"I never wear them, unless at court; but I have got on a new pair of leather breeches, to-day, and I want to see how they fit, by your glass."

Brummell at this moment was announced.

"How very *àpropos* you are arrived," I remarked. "Lord Frederick wants your opinion of his new leather breeches."

"Come here, Fred Bentinck!" said Brummell. "But there is only one man on earth who can make leather breeches!"

"Mine were made by a man in the Haymarket," Bentinck observed, looking down at them with much pride; for he very seldom sported anything new.

"My dear fellow, take them off directly!" said Brummell.

"I beg I may hear of no such thing," said I, hastily—"else where would he go to, I wonder, without his small-clothes?"

"You will drive me out of the house, Harriette," said Fred Bentinck; and then putting himself into attitudes, looking anxiously and very innocently from George Brummell to his leather breeches, and from his leather breeches to the looking-glass.

"They only came home this morning," proceeded Fred, "and I thought they were rather neat."

"Bad knees, my good fellow! bad knees!" said Brummell, shrugging up his shoulders.

"They will do very well," I remarked. "Fred Bentinck, do start a new subject, for first with my latter end, and then with your own, this is quite worn out."

"I am sorry," said Fred Bentinck, "very sorry to say that I am afraid you will turn out bad."

"What do you call bad?"

"Why, profligate! and wicked."

"O! you don't say so? What do you mean by wicked?"

"Why—why, in short," continued Frederic—"in short, shall I drive you down to Greenwich to dinner?"

"And suppose I should grow wicked, on the road?" said I.

"Do you know what the Duke of York says of you, Fred?" said Brummell.

"The Duke of York talks in a very nasty way," said Fred Bentinck, "I—I, for my part, hate all immodest conversation."

"And that is the reason why I save up all the odd stories I can learn, for you, and for you only," I observed. "And yet you come here every day?"

"As to you," said Fred, "you are a beautiful creature, and I come to try to reform you, or else what will become of you when you grow old?"

"Age cannot wither me, nor custom stale my infinite variety," was my reply.

"You are mad!" said Fred Bentinck.

"And you are monstrous top heavy! and madness being often light-headedness, I wish you would go mad too."

"*Apropos*, Mr. Brummell," said I, turning to him. "I have never yet had time to acknowledge your effusion; and I have the less regret on that score, because I learned from Fanny, to-day, that you are false-hearted."

"Julia and I," said Brummell, "are very old friends, you know."

"True," said I, "which, I suppose, accounts for her preference of Horace Beckford."

Brummell's pride appeared to take alarm, as he inquired if Julia really admired Horace.

"I know nothing whatever about it," answered I, "except that I saw them both at the window together to-day."

Brummell seized his hat.

"Take Fred Bentinck with you," said I.

"Come Fred," said Brummell—"but you have not heard what the Duke of York says of you."

"I can guess," replied Fred, trying to make his good-natured face severe and cross.

"Oh! he has accused you to your face, I see," reiterated Brummell.

"So much the better," said Fred Bentinck, "a man cannot be too virtuous."

"Talking of virtue," I remarked to Fred, "really, that brother Charles of yours made himself rather too ridiculous, by writing those letters to Lady Abdy, about his intention to die in case she continued cruel."

"I have no more patience with Charles Bentinck than you have," said Frederic, "particularly with his bringing Lady Abdy to my brother's house. I told him he ought to be ashamed of himself."

"I do not know anything about that, I only allude to the folly of a strong young man like Charles Bentinck sitting down to his muffins and eggs, in a state of perfect health, and with his mouth crammed full of both, calling for half a sheet of paper to write to Lady Abdy, that he was, at that present writing, about to die! and therefore took up his pen, to request her to be kind to his daughter Georgiana, when he should be no more! !"

"I do not set up for a remarkable clever fellow," Fred Bentinck observed; "but if I had made such a fool of myself as Charles did in that business, I would blow my brains out!"

"You are helping him out of it nicely," Brummell observed to Fred Bentinck.

"I have no patience with people who expose themselves," continued Fred Bentinck; "because it is in everybody's power to be silent; and, as to love-letters, a man has no excuse for writing them."

"There's no wisdom below the girdle, some philosopher said in old times," I remarked.

"I wish I could break you of that dreadful habit of making such indecent allusions, Harriette!" said Fred Bentinck.

"I never make them to anyone but you."

"I'll give you ten pounds if you will let me burn this book," said Bentinck, taking up Faublas.

"In the meantime," I continued, "you seem to be glancing

your eye over it with something like satisfaction, for a man, such as the Duke of York describes, of unblemished reputation for chastity! But to revert to your brother's dying, with the hot muffins in his mouth, for Lady Abdy. Would not a man who really and seriously had made up his mind to die for love, have written a little note, and after sealing it with a death's head, or something of that kind, have hidden it somewhere, to be delivered when he should be defunct, instead of talking of death, like Shakespeare's

> ——certain Lord, neat and trimly dress'd,
> Fresh as a bridegroom, and his chin new reap'd?

"Thank God," said Fred Bentinck, laughing, "I shall never be in love!"

"Why, you adore me, and have done so for the last twelvemonth," said I; "but I want you to transfer your love to a friend of mine."

"Do, Fred," said Brummell, taking up his hat, "moderate your passion, if possible, and be sure you burn those leather breeches of yours."

"I want you," continued I, after Brummell had left us, "I want you to fall in love with Julia Johnstone."

"She is a fine woman," answered Fred Bentinck; "only I am so afraid she should love me in return; and if you, Julia, or any woman, were to love me, I should be sick directly."

"How do you know?" I asked. "Who on earth ever tried you that way?"

"Why, there was a woman, six years ago," said Frederick, "who certainly did love me."

"How very extraordinary!" I remarked.

"At least," continued Bentinck, "she gave me such proofs as no man could doubt, and I assure you, I was never so sick or so disgusted in my whole life; and so I am now, whenever I happen to meet her."

"*Fiez-vouz à moi, donc*," said I, "for here you shall ever find safety."

"I know it," answered Bentinck, "and that is why I like you."

He now recollected his intention of visiting the Duchess of York, and took his leave.

Lord Ponsonby and myself met every evening, for more than a week. We were never tired of conversing with each other. His humour exactly suited mine. In short, though I have been called agreeable all my life, I am convinced that I was never half so pleasant or so witty as in Ponsonby's society. We seldom contrived to separate before five or six o'clock in the morning, and Ponsonby generally came to me as soon as it was dark. Nor did we always wait for the evening to see each other, though respect for Lady Ponsonby made us ever, by mutual consent, avoid all risk of wounding her feelings; therefore, almost every day after dinner, we met in the park, by appointment, not to speak, but only to look at each other.

One morning, being greatly struck with the beauty of a young lady who drove by me in a very elegant little carriage, while I was expecting to see Lord Ponsonby, I inquired of the gentleman who was walking with me, if he knew who she was? It was the man, well known in the fashionable world by the appellation of Poodle-Bing; the title of Poodle having been bestowed on him, owing to his very curly, white locks, in defence of which, he always declared that his head was the original from which all the young men and their barbers took base copies.

"It is," answered Poodle, "that most lovely creature, Lady Fanny Ponsonby, whom we are all sighing and dying for."

She was indeed very lovely, and did not appear to be more than eighteen. I considered her with respect and admiration, unmixed with jealousy. This was not the rose; but she had dwelled with it. I thought that she resembled Lord Ponsonby, and I felt that I could have loved her dearly. Thank heaven, thought I, this beautiful girl appears quite calm and happy; therefore I have done her no harm.

In the evening I was eager to praise her to her husband. "She possesses all the beauty of all the Jerseys," said I to him;

"and what a pretty little foot!" This I had observed as she got out of her carriage in Curzon Street.

"How very odd!" Ponsonby remarked.

"What is odd?"

"Why, I do believe you like Fanny!"

"Be sure of it then," I answered. "I like her as much as I should dislike any woman who did not love you dearly. Listen to me, Ponsonby," I continued, taking his hand, and speaking with steady firmness. "All my religion is from my heart, and not from books. If ever our intimacy is discovered, so as to disturb her peace of mind, on that day we must separate for ever. I can but die, and God, I hope, will have mercy on me, very soon after our separation, if ever it should be found necessary: but we are not monsters! therefore, we will never indulge in selfish enjoyments at the expense of misery to any one of our fellow-creatures, much less one who depends on you for all her happiness."

"And she is very happy, thank God," said Ponsonby, "and I would rather forfeit my life than destroy her peace."

"Be firm in that, I entreat you," I replied, "for there can be no rest, here nor hereafter, without the acquittal of our hearts. Mine was devoted to you with that sincere ardour and deep character of feeling which is so natural to me, before I knew that you were married. I know it now, too late to endure life when you shall have left me; but I can die when her happiness shall require it. Alas! I knew not half the anguish and suffering the human frame can endure, and yet survive!

One night, about a week from the day Ponsonby first visited me, when I did not expect him till midnight, I retired to bed and fell fast asleep, which said long nap neither Ponsonby nor anyone else had disturbed. When I awoke, the sun was shining through my curtains. My first waking thoughts were always on Ponsonby, and I recollected, with a deep feeling of disappointment, that he had promised, the night before, to come to me by midnight, and I had desired my maid to send him up into my room as soon as he arrived. I felt for his little watch, which I

always placed under my pillow; judge my astonishment, to find, attached to it, a magnificent gold chain of exquisite workmanship. I began to think myself in the land of fairies! and still more so, when I observed a very beautiful pearl ring on one of my fingers. I rubbed my eyes, and opened them wide, to ascertain, beyond a doubt, that I was broad awake. A very small strip of writing paper, which I had drawn from under my pillow, with my watch, now caught my attention, and I read, written with a pencil, in Ponsonby's small, beautiful characters: *Dors, cher enfant, je t'aime trop tendrement pour t'éveiller.*

It was very sentimental and affectionate, for Ponsonby knew how much I required rest. I was very grateful, and yet I thought it altogether exceedingly provoking! How could I be so stupid as not to awake, even when he had his hand under my pillow, in search of my watch! I rang my bell, and inquired of my maid how long she thought Lord Ponsonby had stayed with me the night before?

More than an hour, was the reply.

"Dear Ponsonby," said I, as soon as she had quitted the room, while I bestowed a thousand eager kisses on the beautiful watch and chain, you are the first man on earth, who ever sacrificed his own pleasure and passions to secure my repose!

Lord Ponsonby's father still continued another fortnight, in the same hopeless state. His favourite son deeply lamented his illness, and had been indefatigable in his attentions,; refusing to visit me, or anybody, as long as there was hope, or while his father could derive comfort from his son's affections; but when nothing more could be done, he had sought comfort in the society of the person who loved him best. I should do Lord Ponsonby great injustice, were I to say that he ever forgot or neglected his father.

I asked a friend of Lord Ponsonby's one day, why he did not adore his beautiful wife? He had no idea that I was acquainted with His Lordship.

"Lord Ponsonby is always very kind and affectionate to her," was the reply.

"True," I continued; "but I have heard that he does not fly to her for consolation when he is melancholy, nor consult her, nor make a friend of her."

"Lady Fanny is a sweet-tempered child," said he, "but not at all clever: and then, poor thing! she is very deaf, which affliction came on after a violent attack of scarlet fever."

"What a beautiful, sweet, and calm expression of countenance she possesses," I remarked, "so pale, that her features, at first sight, appear only pretty; but, on examination, they are found perfect; and her dark, clear, brown eyes——"

"So like your own," said the gentleman, interrupting me.

"I have heard that remark made before," I replied, blushing deeply; "but I am not vain enough to credit it."

"With all their beauty," remarked Ponsonby's friend, "men soon grow tired of those Jerseys, with the exception only of Lady ——, with whom the wicked world say the Duke of Argyle has been in love more than twenty years."

"Is not the boy they call Frank supposed to be a son of the Duke?" I asked.

"I have heard so; but let us hope it is all vile scandal."

"With all my heart; but how does Lady Fanny Ponsonby pass her time?"

"She draws prettily"—he observed; "and she has now got a little companion she is very fond of."

"Who is that?" said I.

"A mouse! which having, one night, showed its little face to Her Ladyship, in her drawing-room, she so coaxed him with her dainties, for three weeks together, that she contrived to tame him; and now he will eat them out of her lovely hands."

"But then after the mouse is gone to bed," said I, "how does Her Ladyship amuse herself?"

"With her youngest sister, or in writing, or drawing. Lady Fanny does not much care for society."

"She is not a flirt, I believe?"

"What man can she think it worth while to flirt with," answered he, "being married to such a one as Ponsonby."

I was charmed to hear my own sentiments from the lips of another, and one of his own sex too.

"You admire Lord Ponsonby then?" said I.

"Admire! depend upon it there is nothing like him in all Europe. I speak of him altogether, as to his beauty, his manners, and his talents; but Lord Ponsonby," he continued, "owing to his extreme reserve, and his excessive shyness, is very little known. He never desires to be known or appreciated but by his own particular friends: yet I know few so capable of distinguishing themselves anywhere, particularly in the senate, as His Lordship: his remarkably fine voice, and his language, always so persuasive and eloquent; besides, he is such an excellent politician. He will now shortly, by the expected death of his father," continued the gentleman, whose name, if I recollect well, was Matthew Lee, "become one of the peers of the United Kingdom. I was telling him, the other day, how much we should be disappointed if he did not take a very active part in the debates.—'God forbid!' said Ponsonby. It is all I can do to find nerve for yes or no, when there is a question in the House, and that in a whisper'."

"How came he to be so shy?" I asked.

"And how came it to become him so well?" returned his friend, "for it would make any other man awkward, and Ponsonby is most graceful when he is most embarrassed. I have known him from a boy. We were at school together. The ladies were all running mad for him before he was fifteen, and I really believe that, at eighteen, Ponsonby, with the true genuine Irish character, and warmest passions, had not looked any woman full in the face; and to this day, his friends are obliged to make him half tipsy in order to enjoy his society. Yet, with all this timidity," he went on, (observing that I was never tired of the subject, and could pay attentiont to no other,) "Ponsonby has a remarkably fine, high spirit. One night, very late, near Dublin, he met two of his brothers, just as they had got into a violent row, with three raw-boned, half naked Irish pats.

"Seeing that his brothers were drunk, Ponsonby began to

remonstrate with them, and strove to persuade them to come home quietly, when one of those ruffians struck his youngest brother a very unfair blow, with a stick.

"'Now, d——n your hearts and b——ds!' said Lord Ponsonby, stripping, and setting to with the strength and spirit of a prize-fighter.

"His own mother, at this moment, could not have known her son: the metamorphosis was nearly as laughable as it was astonishing."

I asked how long he had been married?

"Not five years."

"And Lady Fanny's age?"

"Twenty."

I then asked if he married her for love or money?

"Money! ! !" said Lee, indignantly. "It is now clear to me that you do not know Lord Ponsonby. I was just beginning to suspect, from the multiplicity of your questions, that you did."

"He was very much in love with her then?" I inquired, without attending to this observation.

"She was not fourteen," answered Lee, "when Ponsonby first met her, at her mother's, Lady Jersey's. He was, of course, like everybody else, speedily struck with her beauty. She was not deaf then, but, shortly afterwards, she had a violent attack of the scarlet fever, during which her life was despaired of for several weeks: indeed, there was scarcely a hope of her recovery. I remember Ponsonby said to me, one night, as we passed by Lady Jersey's house together—'The loveliest young creature I ever beheld on earth lies in that room, dying.' The first time Lady Fanny appeared in her mother's drawing-room, she resembled a spirit; so fair, so calm, so transparent. All her magnificent hair, which had before reached, and now again descends much below her waist, had been shorn from her beautiful little head. She often took her lace cap off, and exhibited herself thus to anybody, to raise a laugh; or perhaps she knew that she was, even without hair, as lovely as ever.

"Lord Ponsonby, as he has told me since, was present when

Her Ladyship first left her room, and soon discovered that she was now afflicted with deafness. He felt the deepest interest, admiration and pity for her. He considered, with horror, the bare possibility of this sweet, fragile, little being, becoming the wife of some man who might, hereafter, treat her harshly. Added to this, I fancy," continued Lee, "Ponsonby had discovered that he was not indifferent to Her Little Ladyship; so, to secure her from any of these evils, he resolved to propose for her himself. I need not add, that he was joyfully accepted, by both mother and daughter. He might have done better," added Lee; "and, I fancy Ponsonby sometimes wishes that his wife could be his friend and companion; but that is quite out of the question. Her Ladyship is good, and will do as she is bid; but besides her deafness, her understanding is neither bright nor lively. Lord Ponsonby shews her the sort of indulgence and tenderness which a child requires; but he must seek for a companion elsewhere."

Mr. Lee then took leave of me; and a very few days after this conversation had taken place, Lord Ponsonby's father breathed his last, in the arms of his son, who immediately left town without seeing me; but he wrote to me most affectionately.

A few days after his departure, I was surprised by a visit from Sir William Abdy, with whom I was but very slightly acquainted. I thought it strange his paying any visits so immediately after the elopement of his wife, who was the natural daughter of the Marquess Wellesley, by a French woman who, as I am told, once used to walk in the Palais Royal, at Paris, but afterwards became Marchioness of Wellesley!

"I have called upon you, Miss Harriette," said Sir William, almost in tears; "in the first place, because you are considered exactly like my wife (my likeness to Lady Abdy had often been thought very striking), and, in the second, because I know you are a woman of feeling! !"

I opened my eyes in astonishment.

"Women," he continued, "have feeling, and that's more than men have."

I could not conceive what he would be at.

"You know, Miss Harriette, all about what has happened, and my crim. con. business, don't you, miss?"

"Yes."

"Could you have thought it?"

"Oh yes!"

"And yet, I am sure, Charles Bentinck is worse than I am."

"In what way, pray?"

"Why, a worse head," said Sir William, touching his forehead, "and I don't pretend to be clever myself."

"Is that all? But I would not be so very demonstrative as to touch my forehead, if I were you."

"That Charles Bentinck," said he, half angry, "is the greatest fool in the world; and in Paris we always used to laugh at him."

"But," said I, "why did you suffer His Lordship to be eternally at your house?"

"Why, dear me!" answered Abdy, peevishly, "I told him in a letter, I did not like it, and I thought it wrong; and he told me it was no such thing."

"And therefore," I remarked, "you suffered him to continue his visits as usual?"

"Why, good gracious, what could I do! Charles Bentinck told me, upon his honour, he meant nothing wrong."

This man is really too good! thought I, and then I affected the deepest commiseration of his mishap.

"Why did she run away from you?" said I. "Why not, at least, have carried on the thing quietly?"

"That's what I say," said Abdy.

"Because," I continued, "had she remained with you, Sir, you would have always looked forward with hope to that period when age and ugliness should destroy all her power of making conquests."

"Oh," said Abdy, clasping his hands, "if any real friend, like you, had heartened me up in this way, at the time, I could have induced her to have returned to me! But then, Miss Wilson,

they all said I should be laughed at, and frightened me to death. It was very silly to be sure of me, to mind them; for it is much better to be laughed at, than to be so dull and miserable, as I am now."

"Shall I make you a cup of tea, Sir William?"

"Oh! Miss, you are so good! tea is very refreshing, when one is in trouble."

I hastened to my bell, to conceal the strong inclination I felt to laugh in his face, and ordered tea.

"Green tea is best, is it not, Miss?" said Sir William.

"Oh, yes," answered I, "as green as a willow leaf: and, in extreme cases, like yours, I am apt to recommend a little gunpowder."

"Just as you please, Miss."

I asked him, after he had swallowed three cups of tea, whether he did not feel himself a little revived?

"Yes, Miss, I should soon get better here; but you know my house is such a very dull house, and in such a very dull street too! Hill Street is, I think, the dullest street in all London, do you know, Miss Wilson."

"True, Sir William! would not you like to go to Margate?"

"Why, I was thinking of travelling, for you know, in Hill Street, there is her sofa, just as she left."

"Very nervous indeed," said I, interrupting him. "I would burn the sofa, at all events."

"And then there is her pianoforte."

"Lady Abdy was musical then?"

"Oh, very. She was always at it! I used to be tired to death of her music, and often wished she would leave off: but now she is gone, Miss Wilson, I would give the world to hear her play Foote's minuet!"

"Or, *Off She Goes*," added I.

"What is that, pray, Miss?"

"A very lively dance," I answered.

"True, Miss, I recollect my wife used to play it."

"Dear me, Sir William, how could she be so foolish as to

run away? I dare say you never interfered with her, or entered her room without knocking."

"Never, upon my honour."

"Well, I always heard you were a very kind, obliging, good-natured husband."

"Yes, and sometimes, when I used to knock latterly, Lady Abdy would not open the door!"

"That was wrong," said I, shaking my head, "very wrong."

"And how could that nasty, stupid fellow seduce her, I cannot think!"

"There was good blood in her veins, you know, by the mother's side. Besides, to tell you the truth, I don't think Charles Bentinck did seduce Lady Abdy from you."

"Oh! dear, Miss Wilson, what do you mean?"

"Shall I speak frankly?"

"Oh, Lord a mercy! pray do! I am quite in a fright!"

"I think Fred Lamb was one of her seducers; but how many more may have had a finger in the pie, I really cannot take upon myself to say."

"Oh, Lord! oh, Lord! Miss Wilson!" said Sir William, grasping my arm with both his hands, "you do not say so? What makes you think so?"

"I have seen Fred Lamb daily, and constantly, riding past her door. I know him to be a young man of strong passions, much fonder of enjoyment than pursuit; and further, my sister Fanny, one of the most charitable of all human beings, told me she had seen Fred Lamb in a private box at Drury Lane with your wife, and her hand was clasped in his, which he held on his knee."

"Oh, la, Miss! !"

"Come, do not take on so," said I, in imitation of Brummell's nonsense, and striving to conceal a laugh, "leave your dull house in Hill Street, and set off to-morrow morning on some pleasant excursion. Be assured that you will find fifty pretty girls, who will be so delighted with you, as soon to make you forget Lady Abdy."

"But then," said Sir William, "I cannot think how she came to be in the family-way: for I am sure, Miss Wilson, that during all the years we have lived together, I always——"

"Never mind," interrupted I, "go home now, and prepare for your journey, and be sure to write to me, and tell me if your mind is easier."

"Thank you, Miss Wilson! you are all goodness. I'll be sure to write, and I mean to set off to-morrow morning, and I'll never come back to that nasty, dull, large house of mine again."

"Get the sofa removed," said I, "at all events."

"Yes, Miss, I will, thank you ; and the pianoforte. So good-bye, Miss; " and then returning, quite in a whisper, he said, "perhaps, Miss Wilson, when you and I become better acquainted, you'll give me a kiss!"

I only laughed, and, bade him take care of himself, and so we parted.

All this nonsense was, however, very poor amusement to me, now that I had lost Lord Ponsonby. I considered that although I was, by my hard fate, denied the pleasure of consoling his affliction, I might yet go into the country, and lead the same retired sort of life which he did; and there endeavour, by study, to make myself rather more worthy of him. I am a very ignorant little fool, thought I, but it does not therefore follow that I should remain a fool all my life, like Sir William Abdy. My plan was settled and arranged in less than an hour, and my small trunk packed, my carriage filled with books, and I and my *femme de chambre* on our road to Salt Hill.

I told the landlady of the Castle Inn, that I was come to take up my residence with her for a fortnight, and that I should require a quiet comfortable room to study in. The word study sounded very well, I thought, as I pronounced it; and, after arranging my books in due order, in the pretty rural room allotted to me by my civil landlady, I sat down to consider which of them I should begin with, in order to become clever and learned at the shortest notice, as that good lady provided people with hot dinners.

Ponsonby being forty already, thought I, will be downright old, while I continue to bloom: therefore, when this idea makes him more timid and humble, I should like to improve my powers of consoling him and charming away all his cares. Let me see! What knowledge will be likely to make me most agreeable to him? O! politics. What a pity that he does not like something less dry, and more lively! But no matter! and I turned over the leaves of my History of England, for George the Second and George the Third, and I began reading the Debates in Parliament. Let me consider! continued I, pausing. I am determined to stick firm to the opposition side, all my life; because Ponsonby must know best; and yet it goes against the grain of all my late aristocratical prejudices, which by-the-bye, only furnish a proof how wrong-headed young girls often are.

I began to read a long speech of Lord Ponsonby's late intimate friend, Charles James Fox. This man, thought I, when I had finished his speech, appears to have much reason on his side; but then all great orators seem right, till they are contradicted by better reasoners; so if I read Pitt's answer to this speech, I shall become as aristocratical as ever. I must begin with Pitt, and finish with Fox's answer and objections to Pitt's plan. I tried this method of making a little Whig of myself, *pour les beaux yeux de mi Lord* Ponsonby. After all, said I, pausing, it will be no use and very mean of me to think one way, and profess to think another; and it still strikes me the better reason and the sounder judgment is with Pitt, who seems to go farther, and embrace a vaster and more solid plan, than Fox. The latter finding all that wit and brilliant exercise of humour necessary, makes his appear to me the worse course; then there is too much method in these Whigs, and their abuse of administration becomes pointless; because it seems as though perpetually ready cut and dried; and so vulgar! and opposition is such a losing game! ! and then I have a sneaking kindness for my king.

Quelle dommage! I cannot be a Whig, for the life of me! said I, throwing away the book, and quietly reclining my head

on my hand, in deep thought as to what next I should study, having determined at once, out of respect to Lord Ponsonby, to stand neuter in regard to politics, since I could not make a Whig of myself.

My landlady came in to know what I would have for dinner.

"Oh, ma'am," I exclaimed, pushing aside my book, and walking towards the window, "it is impossible for persons to study, if they are to be interrupted by such absurd questions."

The woman begged my pardon.

"Listen to me, madam," said I, with the utmost concentration of dignity; "I have come into this retirement for the purpose of hard reading; therefore, instead of asking me what I want for dinner every day, or disturbing my books or papers, I shall thank you to bring up a tray with a fowl, or anything you like, exactly at five; and, placing it upon that little table, you must, if you please, go out of the room again, without saying a single word; and when I am hungry, I will eat."

Mine hostess looked at me as if she would have laughed, if she had dared, and I felt somewhat of a sort of inclination to join her; however, I contrived to preserve my consequence, and asked, while attempting to assume a severe frown, how old she would guess me to be?

"About sixteen or seventeen, Miss."

"I am almost nineteen, madam," said I, elevating my head with much pride. "You must not laugh!" I added, seeing that her risible muscles again exhibited symptoms of incipient activity, and well they might; for I was the most tom-boy, childish-looking creature who ever sat down by herself in a large room, to study the merits of Pitt and Fox; and, what was worse, one of the most perfectly uneducated young women of my age, that ever went to school; but then my school was only a French convent, where there really was nothing which excited in me the slightest curiosity after knowledge, and I never learned a single lesson by heart in my life, nor, I believe, ever could. The abbess was in despair about me. The confessor said, with Fred Bentinck, that I should come to no good; and I

played the old nuns so many tricks, that they were all frightened to death of me.

Being once more left to myself, I snatched up a volume of Shakespeare, *pour me désennuier un moment*, and opened it at this passage, in the tragedy of Antony and Cleopatra:

> The barge she sat in, like a burnish'd throne,
> Burn'd on the water; the poop was beaten gold,
> Purple the sails, and so perfumed, that
> The winds were love-sick with them; the oars were
> silver,
> Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made
> The waters, which they beat, to follow faster,
> As amorous of their strokes. For her own person,
> It beggar'd all description: she did lie
> In her pavilion (cloth of gold of tissue)
> O'er picturing that Venus, where we see
> The fancy outwork nature; on each side her
> Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling cupids,
> With diverse coloured fans, whose wind did seem
> To glow the delicate cheek, which they did cool,
> And what they undid, did.

How beautiful! said I, throwing down the book. Can anything be imagined more glowing or more animated than this description? However, I came here to study—and Shakespeare is too amusing to be considered study. True, I have heard people remark, that many passages of Shakespeare's writings are obscure; yet it seems to me that all the beauties are clear and plain, and the little obscurities not worth puzzling about;—therefore I'll study history; one must know something of that. I'll begin with ancient Greece, never mind English history, we can all get credit for that.

The Greeks employed me for two whole days, and the Romans six more: I took down notes of what I thought most striking. I then read Charles the Twelfth, by Voltaire, and liked it less than most people do; and then, Rousseau's Confessions, then, Racine's Tragedies, and afterwards, Boswell's Life of Johnson. I allowed myself only ten minutes for my

dinner. In short, what might I not have read, had not I been barbarously interrupted by the whole family of the Pitchers! who having once taken a fancy to my society, I had no chance but returning to town, as fast as possible, after a three weeks' residence at Salt Hill, during which time I had constantly heard from Lord Ponsonby, who was in Ireland; but hoped, shortly, to join me in town.

I was soon visited by my dear mother. She wished to consult me about what was best to be done to put my young sister out of the way of that most profligate nobleman, Lord Deerhurst, who was, she said, continually watching her in the Park, and streets, whenever she went out. I could hardly believe that anything wrong could be meant, towards a child scarcely thirteen years of age; but my mother assured me that he had been clandestinely writing to her, and sending her little paltry presents of gilt chains, such as are sold by Jews in the streets; these said trumpery articles being presented to my sister Sophia, in old jewel boxes of Love and Wirgman, in order to make it appear to the poor child that they were valuable.

"I see no remedy," said my dear mother, "but sending Sophia to some school, at a distance; and I hope to obtain her father's consent for that purpose, as soon as possible. No time is to be lost, Sophia being so sly about receiving these things, that I only found it out by the greatest accident. The last were delivered to her by a young friend of hers, quite a child, to whom Lord Deerhurst addressed himself, not having been able to meet with Sophia lately."

I was very much disgusted with this account, and quite agreed with my mother, that it would be the safest plan to send the child away.

Before she took her leave she assured me that, if possible, Sophia should depart immediately.

The next day I went to visit Fanny. Colonel Armstrong was with her. I allude to the Duke of York's aide-de-camp. The Earl of Bective was also there.

I inquired how Amy went on.

Sydenham was beginning to consider her evening parties rather a bore, since William Ponsonby had condescended to attend them. Julia, they said, was growing more gracious towards George Brummell than Colonel Cotton liked.

Armstrong, happening to be disengaged, which was seldom the case, proposed our taking Amy, who was a great favourite of his, by surprise, in the absence of Sydenham, who was at Brighton assisting Lord Wellesley to take care of Moll Raffles.

"Do you propose dining with her?" said I.

"Why not?" inquired Colonel Armstrong.

"I hope she will treat you better than she does her own sisters, when we try her pot-luck."

"I am not at all particular," said Armstrong.

"I never saw but one man," retorted I, "among all Amy's train of admirers, whom she did not contrive to cure of their temerity in intruding themselves to dinner.

"The baron Tuille's ardent love was, for six months, proof against Amy's bill of fare. Amy used to sit and sit, till hunger would not permit her to fast any longer, and, at last, she would say, 'Baron! I am going down to dinner; but I have nothing to offer you but a black pudding!'

" 'Note! !' the Dutchman always answered, 'Note! noting I like so vel!' "

"What," said Armstrong, "does she never have anything but black pudding?"

"Oh! yes," I replied, "sometimes toad-in-a-hole, or, hard dumplings; but black pudding takes the lead."

Fanny, with all her good nature, began to laugh as she related the following little anecdote, which had occurred while I was at Salt Hill, *àpropos* to Amy's penchant for a black pudding. My little sister Sophia had been permitted to go and dine with Amy one day, having been particularly invited a week before. Nevertheless, when she arrived, Amy appeared to start, as though surprised, and said, "Oh! by-the-bye, I forgot to order my dinner, and my maid and man are both out with letters and cards of invitation. However, I can soon manage to get a black

pudding broiled. You will not mind running to South Audley Street for a pound of black pudding? Shall you, my dear?"

"Oh, no!" replied Sophia, reddening up to the eyes at the vile proposal, having lately become a coquette, from being told that she was an angel, and being really a very ladylike girl at all times; and just now she wore her smartest dress. However, she always said yes, to whatever people asked her, wanting courage or character to beg leave to differ from anybody's opinion.

The said black pudding, then, was put into her hand by the vulgar, unfeeling pork-butcher, enveloped only by a small bit of the dirty *Times* newspaper, just sufficiently large for her to take hold of it by, in the middle.

Sophia, being a remarkably shy, proud girl, felt herself ready to sink as she walked down South Audley Street, at that very fashionable hour of the day, with such a substitute for a reticule, flourishing, quite bare in her hand, as a greasy black pudding! She tried hanging down her arm; but rose it again in alarm, lest she should spoil her gay new frock. Then a ray of good sense which shot across her brain, her head I mean, induced her, with an effort of desperation, to hold the thing naturally, without attempting to conceal it; but, oh luckless fate! at the very moment poor Sophia had obtained this victory over her feelings, who should she bolt against, all on a sudden, in turning down South Street, but the first flatterer and ardent admirer of her young grace's, Viscount Deerhurst! ! !

The black pudding was now huddled up into the folds of her new frock: then she rued the day when pocket-holes went out of fashion. Deerhurst now holding out his hand to her, her last desperate resource was to throw down the vile black pudding, as softly as possible, behind her, and she then shook hands with his Lordship.

"Miss! Miss!" bawled out at this instant, a comical-looking, middle-aged, Irish labourer, who happened to be close behind her, and had picked up the delicate morsel, at the instant of its fall.

Thrusting forward the spectral lump, "Miss! Miss! how

comed you then, dear, to let go o' this and never miss it? Be to laying hold of it at this end, honey! It's quite clean, dear, and sure and you need not be afeard to handle it at the same end," added Pat, giving it a wipe with the sleeve of his dirty ragged jacket.

Deerhurst, who, it must be allowed, possesses a great deal of natural humour, could stand this scene between Pat and Sophia no longer, and burst into an immoderate fit of laughter, while poor Sophia, almost black in the face with shame and rage, assured the man she had dropped nothing of the sort, and did not know what he meant—and then she ran away so fast, that Deerhurst could not overtake her, and she got safe home to her mother's, leaving Amy to watch, at her window, the arrival of her favourite black pudding.

Colonel Armstrong was absolutely delighted with this account; but said he should decline her pot-luck, as it is vulgarly called. He nevertheless wished us, of all things, to accompany him to her house, and which we agreed to.

We found Amy in the act of turning over the leaves of Mr. Nugent's music book, and Mr. Nugent singing an Italian air, to his own accompaniment, ogling Amy to triple time.

The man commonly called King Allen, now Lord Allen, appeared to be only waiting for a pause of harmony, in order to take his leave.

"Ha! how do you do?" said Amy, and Nugent arose to welcome us with his everlasting laugh.

"Well, Harriette," said Amy, "you are come back, are you? I have heard that you went into the country with your whole library in your carriage, like Dominie Sampson; and let me see, who was it told me you were gone mad?"

"Your new and interesting admirer, His Grace of Grafton, perhaps, for I have heard that he is matter-of-fact enough for anything."

"It is a pity, my dear Harriette, that you continue to have such coarse ideas!" retorted Amy, *en faisant la petite bouche* with her usual look of purity, just as if she had not been

lately receiving the sly hackney coach visits of the old beau.

"A-a-my! A-a-my! was Grafton nice?" I asked.

Armstrong, seeing her rising fury, changed the conversation, by telling her that he had some idea of intruding upon her to dinner the next day.

"Oh, I really shall give you a very bad dinner, I am afraid," said Amy, having recovered from her growing anger towards me, in real alarm.

"My dear Mrs. Sydenham," replied Colonel Armstrong, earnestly, "I hate apologies, and indeed, am a little surprised that you should pay yourself so poor a compliment as to imagine, for a moment, any man cared for dinner, for vile, odious, vulgar dinner, in your society. Now, for my part, I request that I may find nothing on your table to-morrow, but fish, flesh, fowl, vegetables, pastry, fruit, and good wine. If you get anything more, I will never forgive you."

Amy's large round eyes opened wider and wider, and so did her mouth, as Armstrong proceeded; and before he had got to the wine, she became absolutely speechless with dismay. Armstrong, however, appeared quite satisfied, remarking carelessly that he knew her hour, and would not keep her waiting.

"Is anybody here, who can lend me two shillings to pay my hackney coach?" said Allen.

"No change," was the general answer; for everybody knew King Allen!

The beaux having left us, Amy opened her heart, and said we might partake of her toad-in-a-hole, if we liked; but that she must leave us the instant after dinner.

"What for?" Fanny inquired.

"Nothing wrong," answered Amy, of course.

"Very little good, I presume," said I, if we may judge from his appearance; "however (taking up my bonnet), I do not want to run foul of the Duke of Grafton, since he votes me mad;" and I took my leave.

CHAPTER V

The next morning, I received a letter from Lord Ponsonby, to acquaint me that I might expect him in town by eight o'clock on the following evening. It is not, however, my intention to enter into many more minute details relative to my former unfortunate passion for Lord Ponsonby. This is not a complete confession, like Jean Jacques Rousseau's, but merely a few anecdotes of my life, and some light sketches of the characters of others, with little regard to dates or regularity, written at odd times, in very ill health. The only thing I have particularly attended to in this little work, has been, not to put down one single line at all calculated to prejudice any individual in the opinion of the world, which is not strictly correct; and, though I have, in writing of people as I have found them, only done as I would be done by, and as I request my friends will do by me, who never wished, yet, to pass for better than what I really am: yet my gratitude has not permitted me to publish even the most trifling faults of the few who have acted kindly towards me.

With regard to my sisters, I never had but one, and she has ceased to exist, who evinced the least regard for me. I am naturally affectionate, and my heart was disposed to love them all, till years of total neglect have at last compelled me to consider them as strangers. Some of them are my enemies. My sister Amy ever made it her particular study to wound my feelings, and do me all the injury in her power; and having occasion, in a moment of the deepest distress, to apply to Lady Berwick for a little assistance, she refused me a single guinea, notwithstanding in promoting her marriage with Lord Berwick, and on various other occasions, I certainly did my best, and had

done many acts of friendship towards her previous to that period. Neither does this want of feeling for me, proceed from any ill opinion they have formed of my heart or character; for during our dear mother's last illness, Lady Berwick remained at her country house, in spite of all I could say to her, in my daily communications, as to the immediate danger of that dear parent; and her excuse, which she has often expressed for this heartless conduct, was that, since Harriette remained with her mother, she felt sure that no care or attention would be wanting that anybody could afford her. However, it is necessary for the sake of justice to relate the good with the bad: thus, then, be it known that if Lady Berwick would not come up to town, to attend the dreary couch of a most tender parent, she wrote to me every day, notes of inquiry, nay, more, she sent fine apples, and baskets of grapes, from her garden, up to the hour of my lamented mother's death.

These sketches, or memoirs, or whatever my publisher and editor may think proper to designate them, (for my own part I think it quite tiresome enough to write a book, as fast as I can scribble it, without composing either a preface or a new name for it), were began several years ago, merely to amuse myself. I am now only alluding to a few pages of it, for I soon grew tired of my occupation. However, the little I had done pleased my own acquaintances so much, that they all advised me to continue.

The Hon. George Lamb having been good enough to read a comedy which I attempted, was so polite as to say, (and I have his letter now before me,) that although it was too long, and deficient in stage-tact, there was no lack of wit and native humour about it; and further, he thought my talents well calculated for writing a light work, in the form of either novel or sketch-book. He also advised me to put my former name of Harriette Wilson to the work, which he doubted not would the better ensure its sale.

Thus, being almost flattered into something like a good opinion of myself, I ventured one morning to wrap myself up in my large cloak, and put my little unfinished manuscript into

my reticule, for I determined not to write another page till I had ascertained whether it was worth publishing. Thus equipped, I ventured in much fear and trembling, to wait upon the great Mr. Murray, as Lord Byron always satirically called him. He, thought I, being the friend and publisher of Lord Byron, (as Dr. Johnson has it, who slays fat oxen, must himself be fat), should be wiser than George Lamb or anybody else, except Lord Byron alone; therefore I will stand by his decree.

I told Murray that I had so little confidence in myself, that I really could not be induced to go on with my work, till I had obtained his verdict on the few pages I ventured to offer for his inspection.

Murray looked on me with as much contempt as though Ass had been written in my countenance. Now I know this is not the case. He said, with much rudeness, that I might put the manuscript on his table, and he would look at it, certainly, if I desired it.

I asked when I should send for it?

Whenever you please, was his answer; as though he had already recorded his decision against me, and made his mind up not to look at it.

I promised to send for it the next evening. I did so, and the manuscript was returned without an observation. No doubt, thought I, it is all nonsense. I only wish I was quite sure that he had read it! because else it were really cruel thus to damp a beginner—who might have done something perhaps, with due encouragement. I am almost certain that it is trash; but I will be still more assured, lest the mania of scribbling should, in some moment of poverty, attack me again. However, beginning now to feel as much contempt for my manuscript as the Vicar of Wakefield did for his horse, or as I have since felt for the famed Bibliopolist of Albemarle Street, notwithstanding his carriage was numbered with those which followed in the funeral procession of the lamented Byron! I could not present my lucubrations to another publisher, as my own: my nerves would not permit it, and I therefore offered it to Messrs. Allman, of

Princes Street, Hanover Square, as the first attempt of a young friend of mine. I was received by one of those gentlemen, with much politeness, and was requested to allow them four days to send their answer. They fixed their time, and I promised to send for my little manuscript on the day they appointed. It was sealed up and directed, ready for my servant, when he called for it. The envelope inclosed a few lines from Messrs. Allman, stating their readiness to publish the work, which they did not consider libellous,—sharing the expenses and the profits with me.

On the receipt of this note, which I have now in my possession, I got into a rage with old purblind Murray. I wish, thought I, I wish I could make rhymes! I would send him a copy of verses to thank him. The worst of it was, I had never made a single rhyme in my life, and when I had tried to make two lines jingle together, everybody said they had the merit of being infinitely below par; but even that I considered very much better than vile mediocrity, in poetry. In short, there was no rhyme about them, and very little reason. However, I thought that anything would do for Murray, who had been so rude to me; therefore, in a few minutes, I managed to compose and seal up, the following state of the case,—which said composition my reader cannot say I have encouraged him to lose time in perusing.

THE MAIDEN EFFORT OF A VIRGIN MUSE!

I never thought of turning poet,
And all my friends about me know it,
Till t'other day. I'll tell you why.
Alas! the story makes me sigh!
I tried, in prose, a few light sketches,
Of characters—pats, players, and such wretches,
Which my own folks said were pretty:
In fact, I thought them downright witty;
And, for the good of future ages,
I sallied forth, with these few pages,
To a publisher's, in such a hurry,

As to arrive too soon for that beau-thing, Murray,
Who coolly kept the lady waiting.
An old beau must have time for prating.
At last he came. Oh, mercy! Oh, my stars!
What an appalling beau-costume he wears!
A powder'd bob, spectacles, and black coat!
I wish to heaven I had never wrote!
Or ta'en my book, so not here, any where.
Sure this won't do! The man's a bore or bear!
My charms to him were nought: nor my oration:
But what care I for Murray's admiration?
If I had penn'd some Quarterly cupidity,
He would have gladly borne with its stupidity.
At length, Sir, cried I, in a fuming rage,
Pray, just peruse, at least, a single page.
With a most supercilious kind of glance,
Hum, drawl'd out Murray, you've not the slightest chance.
Pray, Sir, must one come here in a bob-wig?
Cried I, in my turn, striving to look big;
And then went home to mourn my waste of paper,
Pens, ink, time, and e'en my last wax taper.
Prosers, methought, require an education;
But poets gain, by birth, their own vocation.

I merely pin it into my manuscript, because it is ready written, and helps to fill up the book, which I have undertaken for several reasons: first, because I hope to get some money by it; secondly, because a certain duke and his son, all! all! honourable men, and with very honourable titles and ancient names, have taken such an unfair advantage of my generous treatment of them that I think they ought to be exposed—

Else they will deceive more men.

But, this is not all. My former errors are well known, and, since they have told their story, I must, in justice to myself, relate mine. To proceed with it in form, I perhaps ought to relate, at large, all the raptures of my meeting with Lord Ponsonby, when he returned from Ireland; how struck I was with the pale cast of thought which enfeebled the brightness of

that sweet countenance, only to increase the interest he previously inspired; how infinitely his deep mourning became him; how he had loved me, for the very thing cross Amy had laughed at me, and called me Dominie Sampson for; how he sent me Voltaire's tragedy of Zaïre, and how delighted he was to find that I felt and understood all its beauties; how he, one day, one night I mean, called me his angelic Harriette! and further declared that, had he known me sooner, he would never have married any other woman! How I used to fancy I could feel his entrance into his wife's private box, at the opera, without seeing him, as though the air suddenly should become purer; how I have astonished Fanny, by guessing the very instant of his approach, without looking towards his side of the house; how he would watch and follow me, in my walks; how he declared that he had never, in his whole life, felt such tenderness of affection for any woman on earth, combining all a father ought to feel, with the wildest passion his first youth had been capable of, with many other matters which it would be tedious to write now; but all this love is gone by, and, for the crime of attaching myself to a married man, I have deeply suffered: and all my affections are now fixed on another, to whom I am bound for life; and being just about to keep a pig and a few chickens, I really cannot mount up the ladder again; and why should I dwell too long on the wild romantic follies of my very youthful days?

During the three short years our intercourse lasted, our passion continued undiminished—increase, it could not. I do, in truth, believe, though it was a wicked thing, no two people on earth ever loved each other better, and the restraint and difficulties we laboured under, kept our passion alive, as it began. Often, after passing the early part of the evening together, finding it so difficult to separate, we drove down in a hackney coach to the House of Lords, and in that coach have I waited half the night, merely for one more kiss, and the pleasure of driving with Ponsonby to his own door.

These three happy years of my life produced very few

anecdotes which I can recollect worth relating; for I had neither eyes, nor ears, nor thoughts, but for Ponsonby. The old Scotch beggar woman in the Park, who had been the cause of my appearing advantageously to His Lordship, was my constant visitor, and I contributed to her comforts, as far as I could. She had once been in very easy circumstances, and was then in the habit of receiving every possible attention from her kind countrywoman, Lady Cottrell.

The old woman used to come to dine with me in a rich brocade silk gown, which stood absolutely alone, and once caused my equally stiff, old, powdered footman to laugh! but as it was I believe for the first time in his life, I forgave him.

Apropos of that same Mr. Will Halliday, who, though always in print, never expected the honour of being published, everybody wished to know why I kept such a clockwork, stiff, powdered, methodistical-looking servant, with a pig-tail? whom one might have taken for Wilberforce himself, instead of Will Halliday; and yet that piece of mechanism, with his eyes turned towards the ceiling, and his hair to match, used to steal my wine, as though he had forgotten all about his commandments; and when I reproached him with it, he declared that it was impossible, "because", to use his own words, "I am the most particlerst man as is"; and, because I preferred losing my wine to being talked to, I submitted.

"Mr. Will," I used to say, "yes and no are all I want to hear from any footman; if they will say more to me than this, I shall wait upon myself."

Will would console himself, on these occasions, with a young companion of mine, while she remained with me, whenever he could find her disengaged, or she had the misfortune to be in the parlour while he was laying the cloth.

"Miss Hawkes," he would begin, to her great annoyance, "Miss Hawkes, now you see my missis don't like a sarvant to say nothing but yes and no. Now sometimes, as I says, Miss Hawkes, yes or no won't do for everything. Missis was very angry about my speaking yesterday; but if I haddunt a told her I

was the most particlerst man as is, she might a thort I drinkt her wine, because I keeps the key of the cellar; and then again, Miss Hawkes, respecting o' my great coat; I wants to tell Missis, as how it's a mile too wide in the back: for you see, Miss, Missis don't observe them ere things. Will you be so good, Miss, as to mention that I wants to show her how my great coat sets behind?"

"I will go and tell her directly," said Miss Hawkes, delighted with an excuse to get away.

"Well then," said I, in answer to what Miss Hawkes told me, "I will look at the man's coat after dinner, only I am sure I shall laugh if he is to walk about the room sporting his beautiful shape."

Having thus for once given Will liberty of speech, I was in dread of its consequences all dinner-time. As soon as he had withdrawn the cloth, and placed the dessert upon the table, he began to cough, and place himself in an attitude of preparation. Now it is coming! thought I, and I saw Miss Hawkes striving to restrain her inclination to laugh out loud, with all her might.

Will began sheepishly, with his eyes and his fingers fidgeting on the back of a chair; but he grew in height, and in consequence, as he went on. "I was a saying to Miss Hawkes, madam, that respecting o' your commands, that yes and no won't do for everything. Now, ma'am, respecting o' my great coat——"

"You had better put it on, William," said I, holding down my head, that I might not look at Miss Hawkes.

"Yes, ma'am; sartanly, ma'am," said Will, bustling out of the room, and returning in an instant, equipped in a drab great coat, so very large behind, that it made him look deformed; but did not, in the least, alter his usual way of strutting about the room, like a player,

> Whose conceit
> Lies in his hamstring, and doth think it rich,
> To hear the wooden dialogue and sound,
> 'Twixt his stretch'd footing, and the scaffoldage.

So, between my horror of making free with John Bull, and my wish to laugh at my footman, I was in perfect misery.

"'Take it off, William,' said I, faintly, and without venturing to raise my head, feeling that another glance at Will, eyeing his person all over, with his sharp little ferret-eyes, would have finished me. "'Take it off, and carry it to the tailor's."

But Will, having once received a *carte blanche* for more than his usual yes and no, was not so easily quieted.

"'Thank you, ma'am, you are very good, ma'am. I'll step down to-night with it; for the other evening, ma'am, when you sent me to carry back that are pheasant, my Lord Lowther's servant brought you, I says, says I, to Sally, 'as it is such a wet night, Sally, I won't put on my laced hat, so I claps on an old plain one; and, when I comed to St. James's Street, there was a bit of a row with some of they there nasty women at the corner, and you see, ma'am, this ere coat sticking out, in this ere kind of a way behind, and with that large cane of mine, there was a man says, says he to me, here, watchman! why don't you do your duty?' "

It was now all over with our dignities. Will, in finishing his pathetic speech, appeared almost on the point of shedding tears. We both, in the same instant, burst into an immoderate fit of loud laughter, when Will had the good sense to leave us.

The next day, Fanny, Miss Hawkes, and myself, drove into Hyde Park. We there met Sophia, with her eldest sister, looking very pretty and, above all, very modest. My carriage was soon surrounded by trotting beaux, whom I could not listen to, because that adored, sly, beautiful face of Ponsonby's was fixed on me *à la distance*. With all my rudeness and inattention, I could not get rid of Lord Frederic Beauclerc. The rest went round to Fanny's side. This was better than going over to the enemy.

Ponsonby knew me and himself too well to be jealous; but, not daring to speak to me,or hear what I said, he looked unhappy, as I guessed, at his friend Fred Beauclerc's persevering attention; so I proposed to Fanny that we should take a drive down Pall Mall.

"Is that Mr. Frederic Lamb's ghost?" said Fanny.

"Where do you mean?" I inquired, and turning my head round, indeed saw Fred Lamb, who had, I believe, just returned from abroad. He blushed a little, and ordering my coachman to stop, told me that I looked remarkably well, and that he knew all about me.

"So you have cut poor Argyle, and are in love again, with a man of my acquaintance?" he continued.

"You are mistaken," said I, reddening.

"It may be so," rejoined Fred, "but I rather think I am right."

I shook hands with, him and hoped we were parting good friends.

"I say, Miss Hawkes," said Will Halliday, in the course of the evening, after we got home, for he generally contrived to *dédommager* himself for the silence I imposed on him by forcing a few words on Miss Hawkes's attention—"If we had a gone a little furder down Pall Mall to-day, we should a seen that are Prince Coburg."

"Really?"

"Yes, Miss; but, laws! Miss, do you know he was nothing in his own country, and had nothing but a small principality?"

About ten o'clock in the evening, when Miss Hawkes had retired to rest, and I was sitting alone with my book, Fred Lamb was announced to me. I desired William to say that it was rather too late, and that I was shortly going to bed.

He returned to inform me that Mr. Lamb knew I never went to bed before midnight, and therefore begged I would permit him to chat with me for half an hour: so, feeling puzzled how to excuse myself, he was desired to walk upstairs.

He talked to me for more than an hour, of Argyle, Lord Ponsonby, and his own former affection for me. He then became a little more practical than I liked; first taking hold of my hand, and next kissing me by force. I resisted all his attempts with mild firmness. At last he grew desperate, and

proceeded to very rough, I may say brutal, violence, to gratify his desires against my fixed determination. I was never very strong; but love gave me almost supernatural powers to repel this very tiger; and I contrived to pull his hair with such violence that some of it was really dragged out by the roots.

Fred Lamb was not of a mild, or patient temper. In a moment of disappointment and fury, at the pain I must have inflicted on him, though it was certainly done only in self defence, he placed his hand on my throat, saying, while he nearly stopped my breath and occasioned me almost the pangs of suffocation, that I should not hurt him another instant. He spoke this in a smothered voice, and I did in truth, believe that my last moments had arrived. Another instant would have decided the business; but he, thank God, relinquished his grasp at my throat. He is, however, mistaken if he believes I have ever forgotten the agony of that moment. We arose from the sofa; his rage, I fancy, being converted into shame, and fear of what I might tell the world, or perhaps he was really shocked at the violence which he had been guilty of. It may easily be imagined that once free from so frightful a grasper of throats, I was not long in obtaining my room upstairs and double-locking my door. Fred Lamb did not attempt to speak to, much less detain me, and in a very few minutes afterwards, I heard him leave the house.

Thank God! I ejaculated, from the very bottom of my heart; and I began to breathe more freely, although it was some time before I recovered my fright.

Fred Lamb was a man of the world; and the next day, he no doubt said to himself, this is a bad story both for my vanity and my character: for I have been very brutal. The best way, now, will be for me to tell it first, to all her friends; and he accordingly went about making light of the story, as though he had not any reason to be ashamed.

"Do you know," said he to several of my acquaintances, who afterwards repeated it, "do you know that Harriette is so in love with John Ponsonby, that she was cruel even to me last night!

I tried force too; but she resisted me like a little tiger, and pulled my hair!"

Be it so, thought I, and I never told the story till now. In fact, I was a good deal afraid of Fred Lamb at that time, and could not but feel provoked at the idea of a young man going about the world, always laughing, and shewing off the character of a fine, good-tempered, open-hearted, easy, generous, sailor-like fellow, and who, yet, could take me from a rich man, to leave me starving at Somers'-town, as he had done, without once making me the offer of a single shilling, and then return to me, as though all this selfishness had secured him a right over my person, to persecute me with brutal force, and lay hold of my throat, so as to put me in fear of my life, because I was not his humble slave, any day in any week, when he happened to return from the Continent; and I am sure Mr. Frederic Lamb cannot assert that, on the day I believed he meant to have been my last, he had ever given me one single guinea, or the value of a guinea.

He is now an ambassador, and just as well off as ambassadors usually are; yet, in my present poverty, I have vainly attempted to get an hundred pounds out of him. He has occasionally, indeed, sent me ten or five pounds; but not without much pressing; and he has not yet paid my expenses to Hull and back.

So much for the high-spirited Fred Lamb! With his brother George, I have only a very slight acquaintance; but am much indebted for the very polite, friendly, and condescending interest that gentleman has been pleased to take in my welfare.

About this time, I received a letter from Sir William Abdy, beginning thus:

DEAR, PRETTY MISS WILSON,

You told me to be sure and write.

I am a good deal better for the journey, though I have not seen anybody so pretty as you, since I left you. . . .

The rest of this eloquent epistle may be dispensed with.

Lord Ponsonby often rated me about Lord F. Beauclerc, his relation, whom he always called Fred Diamond Eye; and Fred

Beauclerc was continually teasing me about Ponsonby. I assured him that it was all nonsense.

"I know better," F. Beauclerc would answer, "and yet I am fool enough to love a woman who is going mad for another man. However, if I get well over this folly, I will, for the rest of my life, reign lord paramount or nothing."

His Lordship really loved me, and, above all, he loved my foot. I was never, in his opinion, *assez bien chaussée*, therefore, he used to go about town with one of my shoes in his pocket, as a pattern to guide him in his constant search after pretty shoes for me.

Fred Beauclerc is a sly, shy, odd man, not very communicative, unless one talks about cricket. I remember when the Marquess of Wellesley did me the honour to call on me and tell me what a great man he was, and how much he had been talked of in the world,—how often carried on men's shoulders without nags, with other reminiscences of equal interest, Fred Beauclerc, the Diamond Eye, cut me for Moll Raffles. I accused him of it, laughing, and he, laughingly, acknowledged the intrigue.

"I could not endure the idea of your receiving that vain old fool, Lord Wellesley," said Beauclerc.

"No harm, believe me!" I replied. "Mere curiosity induced me to have the man up, to see if he was like his brother; but you are very welcome to Mrs. Raffles; she'll make an excellent wife to a divine. Not that I know or care anything about the lady!"

"And what think you of Wellesley?" said the little parson.

"Why, I suppose I must either say he is clever and brilliant, or be called a fool myself; so instead of answering your question, I'll tell you what he says to me to-morrow, after I shall have acquainted him with your intrigue with his *belle amie* Raffles."

"You are not serious?" said the good clergyman in a great fright.

"Yes, I am quite serious, I assure you."

"What! You spoil sport! You make mischief! I would not have believed this of you."

"You only do me justice,—but I will tell, notwithstanding:

and if I either spoil your intrigue, or do mischief to anybody except the noble Marquess, never forgive me."

"I never will," said Beauclerc, seriously, and so we parted.

In the evening a remarkably fine-looking man requested to speak to me, from the Marquess of Wellesley. He wore a large brilliant on the third finger of his very white hand, and was peculiarly elegant in his dress. I offered him a chair with much politeness, feeling really something like respect for Lord Wellesley's good taste in sending me such an amiable substitute for a little, grey-headed, foolish old man. The gentleman bowed low, and refused to sit. He told me that he came from the Marquess of Wellesley, merely to say that if I were disengaged, he would have the pleasure of calling on me in less than an hour.

C'est son valet, sans doute, thought I; and sent my compliments to Lord Wellesley.

Wellesley's carriage drove up to my door, in less than an hour after his gentleman had left me. His Lordship appeared the very essence of everything most *recherché*, in superfine elegance. He was, in fact, all essence! Such cambric, white as driven snow! Such embroidery! Such diamonds! Such a brilliant snuff-box! Such seals and chain! And then, the pretty contrast between the broad new blue ribbon across his breast, and his delicate white waistcoat!

It was too much, too overpowering for a poor, honest, unaffected Suissess like me:—and I almost wished myself safe in my Canton de Berne; for never before stood I in such presence, nor breathed I in such essence! What a pretty little thing too, it would be, methought, if it were but once deposited, unhurt, in one's bonnet-box, and one could shut him down whenever the essence became too strong for one's nerves. It was a graceful thing too, in miniature, and its countenance was good, and its speech was all honey, until I, very quietly, and very unceremoniously, mentioned the worthy clergyman having passed the whole of the night preceding with Moll Raffles, consoling her, *en prêtre*, for His Lordship's absence.

His Lordship now asked me, in a voice trembling more with agitation than age, or rage, what I meant?

"Simply what I have stated."

"Merciful powers! what do you say? what do you mean? what do you hint at? what do you think? what are you doing?" If His Lordship's want of breath had not given a momentary check to his volubility, and proved a kind of turnpike in his rapid course, and if I had not caught the critical opportunity to say—

"Nothing—your fair friend must do for us both"—I have little doubt that the little Marquess must and would have fallen a victim to exhaustion: but thus, having happily had a moment to recover himself, he proceeded,

"Nay, nay, nay," and laying his white hand, rings and all, on my shoulder, in much tribulation and hurry of speech and manner, "Nay—think of what you are saying—think how you may be injuring that lovely sweet being—that sweetest unsophisticated! lovely! sweet! !"

"Oh, what a bed of sweets yours must be!" interrupted I.

"I know well enough," continued Wellesley, pacing up and down the room with a feverish rapidity, "I know she went to Vauxhall with Beauclerc;—but then she told me there was nothing in all this."

"Poor Beauclerc!" ejaculated I;—"and what can His Lordship do better, than attend so sweet a creature? Come, come," I continued, "my lord! Don't be such an ape! Mrs. Raffles is rich, and can do without you, kindly assisted as she is by the little parson!—Don't fret for her, nor for yourself; but if you still love her, receive her from the hands of the good clergyman."

"Impossible!" Wellesley exclaimed. "I must reproach her with her faults, and then—she will throw the plates and dishes in my face!"

"No! would she be so vulgar?"

"It is not vulgarity in her," said Wellesley.

"What then?"

"Nature," was his reply.

"Well then, since it is natural to break your head, which fact I do not in the least dispute, may it not be as natural to adorn it occasionally? and may it not be her nature to intrigue with Fred Beauclerc? Do not think about it, my lord. Make yourself happy and comfortable, and——"

Wellesley took up his hat, and ran downstairs. I followed him, laughing loudly, till he got into his carriage.

Beauclerc was in due time tired of his *bonne fortune*, and this gave Wellesley the delicious opportunity of pressing his charmer to his faithful and doating heart with renovated rapture.

La Belle Nature! !

About this time, or else some other time, a Mr. Something-doff was presented to me, hot from Russia. I forget the beginning of his name. I recollect that he brought, at the ends of his fingers, a very odd waltz, which seemed to have been composed on purpose to warm them. I asked him, since he was on the Emperor's staff, if he had met with the General Beckendorff.

"Oh, yes!" answered he, laughing, "Beckendorff is my particular friend. He wanted to come to England with me; but, he assured me, he had made such a fool of himself about a woman here, Amy, I think he called her, that he was ashamed to show his face within a thousand miles of herself or her friends."

And now, my gentle readers: by the bye, I have no idea why they are so denominated, or why authors, and good ones too, even Lady Morgan, at the beginning, she is too great a swell now (I only make use of that elegant expression in humble imitation of Lord Clanricarde), once prosed a great deal about her gratitude for the kind encouragement and indulgence of the public; why, in the name of common sense, will authors be so very palpably false in what they profess?

Does not Lady Morgan know, as well as I do, that the public never yet read one line out of charity towards her, or any author breathing, since the world began; nor does the kind public ever prize anything which bores them; so that, if the kind public were to cry up my book, from morning till night, and

suffer me to make my fortune by it, I should feel no more obliged to them, than if my volumes kept their station on the shelves of Mr. Stockdale's spacious library, as regularly in a row as the apothecary's gallipots in the Honey Moon; but just the contrary. If I have the knack to amuse the public, I shall expect the public to be extremely grateful to me; and I desire that they sing my praise, in prose, and also in better rhymes than mine, to the end of their natural life! True, Dr. Johnson, and many other good men, declare that merit is due to such authors as do their best, even when they fail; but what is the use of its being due, since nobody pays? What is an author, or anybody else, the better for having a parcel of bad debts on his ledger? The good Doctor seems really to be giving Lady Morgan, as well as poor Harriette, a rap on the knuckles, when he says, 'No vanity can more justly incur contempt and indignation, than that which boasts of negligence and hurry. For who can bear, with patience, the writer who claims such superiority to the rest of his species, as to imagine mankind are at leisure for attention to his extemporary sallies. Now, for my part, I do not expect any persons to exercise their patience, in bearing with me; being as morally certain as I am of my existence, that these, my temporary sallies, like other people's studied stupidity, will be equally thrown aside, if they happen to be equally unentertaining, without more regard or respect for the one than the other. In short, whatever contempt my vanity may incur, in writing these few sketches thus easily, and without tormenting myself with quotations and deep cogitations, I shall beg to lay all the blame entirely on Stockdale, especially as he has just handed me a quotation from Cumberland, as he styles it, though I am not without suspicion that he had a hand in it himself.

As for our readers, on whom we never fail to bestow the terms of candid, gentle, courteous, and others of the like soothing cast, they certainly deserve all the fair words we can give them; for it is not to be denied but that we make occasionally very great demands upon their candour, gentleness, and courtesy, exercising them frequently and fully with such trials as require those

several endowments in no small proportion.

But are there not also fastidious, angry, querulential readers? Readers with full stomachs, who complain of being surfeited and over-loaded with the story-telling trash of our circulating libraries? It cannot be altogether denied: but still they are readers: if the load is so heavy upon them as they pretend it is, I will put them in the way of getting rid of it, by reviving the law of the ancient Cecerteans, who obliged their artists to hawk about their several wares, carrying them on their backs, till they found purchasers to ease them of the burden. Was this law put in force against authors, few of us, I doubt, would be found able to stand under the weight of our own unpurchased works.

Now, gentle readers, after this long digression, you shall hear of the shocking seduction of the present Viscountess Berwick, by Viscount Deerhurst!

"She is off! Sophia is off! run away, nobody knows where," was the cry of all my sisters, one fine morning.

"When, how, where?" said I.

"Last night," answered Fanny, "she was missing. Her father has been to call on Lord Deerhurst: answer, nobody in town. My mother is coming to consult with you."

I waited for no more; but sat down to address Lord Deerhurst, begging him to consider the risk he ran in detaining such a child. I asserted the determination of my father to put in force the utmost rigour of the law; and I implored him, if he was not really dead to shame, and all the best feelings of a man, to repair his fault by bringing Sophia back to me immediately.

That prince of hypocrites, having forcibly obtained all he wished, and, in hopes that this would be the cheapest way of getting rid of the business, made a great merit of bringing her back to my house, being, as he said, touched, even to tears, by my letter, and the monster began to blubber, and declared that nothing wrong had occurred, he having passed the night with Sophia in mere conversation.

The poor child looked dreadfully frightened. It is indeed my firm belief that she went away with Lord Deerhurst, being

innocent as an infant as to the nature of seduction, and its consequence. All she was blameable for, was her obstinate boldness in persisting, while so very young, and with that innocent face of hers, in keeping up a sly intercourse with a man like Lord Deerhurst, and throwing herself under his protection, at an age when girls less shy-looking had been afraid to have listened or spoken to any man, unsanctioned by the presence of their mother or sister.

Sophia was a child, and not a very clever one; but she went away willingly, and immediately after both her mother and myself had represented the striking profligacy and disgusting meanness of Lord Deerhurst, in passing off trumpery chains and rings for valuable jewellery. The child who could forsake her parents for such a man as Deerhurst, in spite of every caution, must have been either very vicious, or the greatest simpleton on earth.

The poor foolish girl was now kept out of everyone's sight, and applications were made to Deerhurst, for a provision for her, with a threat of law-proceedings in case of refusal.

It seems that the only legal plea for obtaining a provision for a girl thus unfortunately situated, is that of the parents having lost her domestic services. Deerhurst, after some months, at last said that, if Sophia remained with him, he would settle three hundred pounds a-year on her, as long as no proof of inconstancy to him should be established against her; but, on such an event taking place, the annuity was to be reduced to an allowance of one hundred a-year.

I saw that Sophia was growing idle, and much more likely to get into worse scrapes than to reform; therefore, having tried the generosity and honour of men myself, I advised her to secure the annuity, at any rate. Deerhurst employed a —— of a lawyer to draw up a settlement according to the above plan, and, in about ten months after His Lordship first seduced Sophia, he hired a very miserable lodging for her, consisting of two small dark parlours, near Grosvenor Place; but then, to make her amends, he sent her in six bottles of red currant-wine,

declaring to her that such wine was much more conducive to health than any foreign wine could possibly be. Here we must leave her for a short time, while I return to my own house, to learn, of Will Halliday, who had called in my absence. These were, a gentleman who would not leave his name, and a tradesman of the name of Smith:—both were to return in the evening.

"Very well," I said, "let Smith come upstairs; but be sure to send away the man who is ashamed of his name."

After dinner, Will told me that the strange gentleman begged to be allowed to speak to my *femme-de-chambre*, Mrs. Kennedy.

I desired Kennedy to attend me.

She returned to say that the gentleman sent me word, in confidence, that he was Lord Scarborough, who had been so long, and so very desirous to make my acquaintance—and regretted the impossibility of getting presented, since he was not a single man.

"Go and tell him," I answered, "that the thing is quite impossible, more men being regularly introduced to me by others, and of the first respectability, than I liked."

He entreated Kennedy to come up to me again. She declared that she could not take such a liberty with me. Lord Scarborough having, as she afterwards confessed, softened her heart by a five-pound note, induced her to carry me up his watch, with his arms on the seal, that I might be certain who he was.

I was in a great passion with Kennedy, and down she went, declaring she had lost her place.

I rang the bell, it having just struck me that the man ought to pay for putting me in a passion and giving us all this trouble; therefore, "Tell him," I said, when Kennedy returned, "that a fifty pound note will do as well as a regular introduction, and, if he leaves it to-night, I will receive him to-morrow at ten."

He hesitated—wished he could only just speak to me, and give me the draft himself.

"Do as you like," Kennedy replied. "Miss Wilson is not at

all anxious for you or your fifty pounds; but she has company, and will not be disturbed to-night."

"Well," said my lord, "I think you look like an honest, good sort of woman, who will not deceive me."

"Never," said Kennedy with earnestness; and he wrote a draft for me, for fifty pounds, begging she would herself be at hand, to let him in when he should arrive the next night. "I will be very punctual," continued His Lordship.

"So will I too," repeated Kennedy; "I will wait for you in the passage:" and with this they took leave, and I immediately rang my bell for Will Halliday.

"William," said I, "that gentleman will be here at ten to-morrow, and he will, probably, again ask for Kennedy. Can you look quite serious, and declare to him you never heard of such a person?"

"As grave as I do now, ma'am."

"Very well, that is quite enough; but he will, no doubt, proceed to ask for me, by my name. Can you still be serious, while declaring that you have no mistress, and that your master is, you know, well acquainted both with His Lordship and his lady wife?"

"Most certainly, ma'am," said Will, as seriously as though he had been at vespers; "I will just clap your directions down in my pocket-book; so you need not be afraid of me, ma'am; because you see, as I told you before, I'm the most particlerst man as is."

"But suppose he insists, William?"

"Oh, ma'am! I'll tell him I've got my knives to clean, and shut the door, very gently, in his face."

"Thank you, William, I shall feel obliged to you."

Smith, the haberdasher of Oxford-street, was the next person announced to me; and he followed William into the drawing-room. He is a short, thick-built man, with little twinkling eyes, expressive of eager curiosity, and a bald head. This man had known me when I was quite an infant, having served my mother, I believe, before I was born, and often talked and

played with us all while children. As I grew up, his extreme vulgarity, and the amorous twinkle of his little eyes, furnished me with so much real sport and amusement, that, in gratitude for his being so very ridiculous, I had, by degrees, lost sight of all my usual reserve towards these sort of people; and once, when I was about eleven years of age, this man caught me in the very act of mimicking his amorous leers at our maidservant. I was close behind him, and he saw me in the looking-glass.

"Oh, you rogue!" said Smith; and from that day, good-bye all serious reserve between Smith and me. I would have cut him, only nobody sold such good gloves and ribbons. I often took people to his shop to amuse them, while I encouraged Smith to be as ridiculous as possible, by affecting to be rather flattered by his beautiful leering and his soft speeches.

Smith was as deaf as a post, and never spoke without popping his ear against one's mouth, to catch the answer, and saying, hay! hay! long before one's lips could move to address him.

I guessed at the motive for his visiting me on this occasion; for I knew that two of my promissory notes of hand, for fifty pounds each, had been returned to him on that morning, as they had also been three months before, when I made him renew them. Not that I was in any sort of difficulty during the whole period I remained with Lord Ponsonby, who always took care of me, and for me; but Smith's scolding furnished me with so much entertainment, that I purposely neglected his bills, knowing his high charges, and how well he could afford to give long credit. He came into the room with a firmer step than usual, and his bow was more stately.

"Your sarvant, Miss."

"Smith," said I, "those bills were paid to-day, I hope?"

Smith shook his head. "Too bad, too bad, Miss, upon my word!"

I laughed.

"You are a pretty creature!" said Smith, drawing in his breath, his amorous feelings, for an instant, driving the bills out of his head, and then added hastily, with an altered expression of countenance, "But you really must pay your bills!"

"You don't say so?"

"If," continued Smith earnestly; "if you had but ha' let me ha knode, you see; but, in this way, you hurt my credit in the city."

"What signifies having credit, in such a vulgar place as that?"

"You talk like a child," exclaimed Smith, impatiently.

"Come," said I, "Smith, hand out your stamps."

"And, Miss, do you expect me to find you in stamps too?"

I laughed.

"But," continued Smith, growing enthusiastic all at once, "you look so beautiful and charming, in your little blue satin dress. You bought that satin of me, I think? Ah, yes, I remember—you do look so pretty, and so tempting, and so, so—oh Lord."

"Mr. Smith, I really will speak to Mrs. Smith, if you will go into these sort of raptures."

"Beg your pardon! beg your pardon! Have got a curious little article here to shew you (pulling something from his breeches pocket, which proved to be some embroidered, covered buttons). Beg your pardon, but bless you! ! ! You are so well made, you see about here (touching his own breast). There is never a one of your sisters like you about here. I always said it. Hay? hay? I was a saying so, you see, to my young man, yesterday, when you came into the shop. Now, there's Miss Sophy, pretty creature too! very, but oh, Lord! you beat them all, just about here."

"Mr. Smith, I really must send a note to your wife to-morrow."

"Oh, no! I am sure you won't. You would not be so hard-hearted." He then proceeded, in a whisper, "The fact is, there's never a man in England as don't have a bit of frolic; only they doesn't know it you see. Pretty hair! !——"

"Mr. Smith, if you meddle with my hair, I shall seriously be angry, and ring for my servant."

"Beg pardon—thousands of pardons—it's the worst of me, I'm so imperdent, you see!—can't help it—been so from a

child—never could keep my hands off a fine woman! and Mrs. Smith is confined, you see: that's one thing! hay? hay? but it shan't happen again. Now, about these here bills? If I draw you up two more, now, will you really give me your word they shall be paid?"

"No," answered I.

"You won't?"

"No!"

"Then I'll tell you what, Miss! I can't say as you treat me exactly like a lady, and——now don't laugh,—oh, you sly, pretty rogue!—hay? hay? beg pardon—it's my only fault, you see. So very imperdent! Come, I'll draw up these here bills."

He began writing, and I laughed at him again. He shook his head at me. "Sad doings, Miss, these here bills being returned."

"It's the worst of me," said I, mimicking his manner. "It's the worst of me, that I never do pay my bills. Have been so from a child!"

Lord Ponsonby's wellknown rap at the door occasioned Smith to be bundled into the street, bills and all, without the slightest ceremony.

I have, I believe, already said that I would not dwell much on that period of my life which I passed so happily with Lord Ponsonby, and which lasted, I think, three years. Lord Rivers used to say to me, "Your little, light feet seem scarcely to touch the earth, as though you could almost fly!"

Happiness is a stupid subject to write upon; therefore, I will revert to that of the present Lady Berwick, whom I often visited after she took possession of the poor, humble lodging which Deerhurst's parsimony had provided for her. First, however, the respect I feel for the memory of a most tender parent, makes me anxious that she should be acquitted from every shadow of blame, which might, by some, perhaps, be imputed to her, in consequence of her daughters' errors, and the life they fell into.

My mother was a natural daughter of a country gentleman, of great respectability, and good estate, Mr. Cheney. His only son,

General Cheney, was an old guardsman, and died some few years ago. The late Lady Frederic Campbell, aunt of His Grace the Duke of Argyle, was so struck with the beauty of my mother, as to adopt her, and bring her up as her own child. After her marriage, Her Ladyship still continued her friendship, and, indeed, almost up to the time of the very lamented death of that amiable lady.

I remember the ceremony of our being all dressed up in, our best frocks, to go out of town, and pass the day with Her Ladyship, who was kind enough to stand godmother to my eldest sister. My mother was the most beautiful woman, and possessed the finest and most benevolent countenance, I have ever seen in my whole life. Her education had been carefully attended to by Lady Frederic, and she possessed a most excellent understanding; but marrying, so very young, a man more than twenty years her senior, and being remarkably meek and gentle, she acquired such a habit of blind submission to his will that, at home, she was more like our sister than our parent. She was powerless to contribute either to our good or our comfort, in any one thing which did not suit my father's humour. Having no fortune to bestow on us, she gave us the best education in her power; and, what ought to have done us still more good, she ever set us the very best example; for she was not only virtuous, but patient, industrious, and invariably amiable in her temper. She was the mother of fifteen children when she died, lamented and respected by everyone who knew her.

Our home was truly uncomfortable; but my dearest mother ever made it the study of her life, to contribute to the ease and welfare of her family.

This, as I have said before, is not a complete confession; but nothing is stated of consequence to any individual, which is not strictly true.

When I called on Sophia, I generally found two or three beaux talking nonsense to her. Among them, Henry De Roos

was the most favoured. Sophia appeared to dislike Lord Deerhurst of all things, and complained that he was unusually sparing of soap and water, at his toilette.

"He dresses completely," said Sophia, "before he touches water; and, being equipped, he wets a very dirty hair-brush, and draws it over his head; and this is what he calls washing it—and then, having thus washed his hands and face, he says that he feels fresh and comfortable."

One day Deerhurst insisted on my accompanying him and Sophia, in his curricle, to go out of town, somewhere, to dinner.

"Three in a curricle?" said Sophia.

"Oh, it is no matter, at this time of the year," Deerhurst replied.

I inquired where we should dine?

Deerhurst named some small place, about eight miles from town, but I have forgotten what he called it. He took us to a common village pot-house, where nothing could be put on the table besides fried eggs and bacon.

"Most excellent!" exclaimed Deerhurst; "an exquisite dish —and so very rural!"

Our rural dinner was soon dispatched; and, as I could not endure the strong smell of tobacco, which issued in copious fumes from the tap-room, I proposed returning to town as fast as possible.

Sophia, who always agreed with everybody, was asked first by Deerhurst, if eggs and bacon were not a delightful dish?

She answered, "Very much so indeed."

I then asked her, if it were not enough to make us sick, on such a hot day?

To which her reply was, "I am quite sick already."

In coming home, Deerhurst put his horses all at once into a full gallop, as we drew near the turnpike, bent on the noble triumph of cheating—I will not use the technical word—the man, of twopence! ! The lord of the gate, in a fury, ran after Deerhurst, and with some difficulty, contrived to catch hold of his whip.

"Let go my whip!" vociferated Deerhurst.

"You sneaking b—kg—d!" said the man, still holding fast by one end of the whip; "this is not the first time you have attempted to cheat me."

"Let go my whip, and be d——d to you!" bawled Deerhurst.

The man, however, refused, and, in the struggle it was broken.

"Now, d——n your soul," said Deerhurst, darting from the curricle, without the least regard to our fears, and leaving us to manage two spirited horses how we could. In an instant he had stripped off his coat, and was hard at it with the fat, dirty turnpike-man.

"Oh!" ejaculated I, in despair, "that ever I should have ventured out in such disgusting society!"

"Very disgusting indeed," echoed Sophia.

Once Deerhurst was down; but we soon discovered that the fat turnpike-man was undermost, and "Go it, my lord! you a lord? a rum lord!" burst from a Babel-like confused world of voices.

The Honourable Arthur Upton happened to be passing at this moment. I called out to him by his name, and he came up to the curricle. I told him that we were frightened, almost to death at the scene which presented itself; and our peculiar situation, having no proper dresses, nor shoes, for walking, and requested that he would make somebody stand at the heads of the horses.

He did so, and afterwards obligingly made his way to Lord Deerhurst. He begged His Lordship would excuse the liberty he took, adding, "We know each other personally, Lord Deerhurst, and I cannot help feeling hurt and grieved to see you so engaged, particularly with two young ladies under your immediate protection. I feel myself bound, seeing so many blackguards against you, to stand by you, as long as you choose to keep me in this very disgraceful situation."

"What," cried out the many-mouthed-mob, "you are another lord, I suppose? Here's rum lords for you! cheating a poor man out of two-pence, and then stopping to fight in the road.

My sarvices to you, my lord! Who would not be a lord?"

"Out of respect for you, Mr. Upton," said Deerhurst, "I will pay this fellow"; and thus, after knocking the poor man about till he was black and blue, His Lordship being possessed of all such skill as his friends Crib and Jackson had taught him, he paid him the two-pence which was originally his due, and was hissed and hooted till he drove out of sight.

When he rejoined us, his nose and fingers were covered with blood.

"Did you ever see such an impudent rascal, my dear Sophia," said Deerhurst to her.

"Never in my life," prettily repeated Sophia, in her own cuckoo-strain.

Some days after this interesting rural party, I called, with Fanny, to see Amy, and found the door of her drawing-room locked.

"Good gracious," said Amy, as she opened it, after keeping us some time, "why does not John send the locksmith to this vile door, as I have so constantly desired him! It's quite a nuisance, being obliged to lock it in order to keep the wind out."

I shall not easily forget the figure Arthur Upton cut. When we entered, his powder and pomatum was rolling down his face, in large drops! I can't conceive what it could all mean! !

But beg security to bolt the door,

as Lord Byron somewhere has it.

"Amy," said I, "I have news for you of your sighing, waltzing Beckendorff."

"Oh, lord!" answered Amy, "I am sorry the poor fool is returned; for I really cannot marry him now."

"I do not think you can," answered I, and then related what I had heard.

"He is the fox, and I am the grapes," said Amy; "for, no doubt, he has heard I am Mrs. Sydenham."

"Alias Upton," continued I.

"Harriette judges of other people by herself," retorted Amy; "but, being innocent, these things never wound my feelings."

CHAPTER VI

By this time, my most gentle readers are growing, *tant soit peu*, tired of—what they presume to call—my consummate nonsense! and an indulgent public is, I must however say, somewhat prematurely, thinking about throwing aside my very charming narrative of facts in high life, as they actually took place; though I do not specify in what year or years; being anxious to forget all such critical matters as dates.

To such of the kind public as may have a perverted taste for the serious, I beg leave to state that I am now making my debut in a tragic part; but venture, humbly, to express the hope that my tragical adventures will furnish more interest to my readers, than they supplied amusement to me.

I have twice before stated, that Lord Ponsonby's attachment to me continued, or appeared to continue, unabated, for the space of nearly three years: *et savez-vous, mes belles dames, que cela est beaucoup?* Towards the end of that period, he, one evening appeared to me unusually melancholy. I had frequently reproached him with making a mystery to me of something which must have happened to him; but he not only assured me that I was mistaken, but began to affect more than his accustomed gaiety; and he acted his part so well, that I was doubtful whether I had not been altogether deceived.

"Then perhaps you are only out of health," said I, "instead of out of spirits? for I am sure that your hands are feverish."

"Now you have discovered it," said Ponsonby, laughing—"I am going to die!—Would you regret me?" said he: and then, in a tone of much feeling, added, as he put back my thick hair

with his two hands, to kiss my forehead, and examine the expression of my countenance, intensely, as though he were taking a last farewell of it,—"I will not ask you; for I am sure you would."

He now took up some paper and began to write, holding his hand before the paper, to prevent my seeing a single line.

"What are you writing?" I asked.—"Private business," was Ponsonby's answer.

On this I sat down to my pianoforte, that I might not interrupt him. Yet it struck me, that it must be something for me, or he would not have written it at my house.

Lord Ponsonby had often hinted that he wished to make a provision for me, during my life, of two hundred pounds a-year. I imagined that this might be something of a promise to that effect: but as I knew Ponsonby, at that time, to be very poor, and much in debt, my resolution was taken at once. He will divide his purse with me, thought I, while he lives and loves me,—and I will never look forward, nor provide for one hour after Ponsonby shall be lost to me.

As soon as he had sealed up a letter, which he put into his pocket, he looked at his watch, and starting upon his feet, said in a voice of real distress, "I must go!—Who would have imagined that it could be so late!"

"Must you go home already?" I asked.

"Not home; but to the House of Lords," Ponsonby replied. "But, my dear Harriette, I cannot lose you at this moment! Perhaps you were right, and my spirits may have been rather lower than usual to-night! Will you come down with me in a hackney coach, as far as the House?"

I acquiesced willingly; and when we arrived there I begged to be allowed to wait for him. "I do not care if it should be all night," said I, "for you'll come at last, and we can drive towards your house together."

Ponsonby answered that I was very good; but in the greatest despondency.

In half an hour, he came to the coach-door, to say that the

House would sit late, and he could not bear the idea of my waiting.

"All these things, my dearest Ponsonby," said I, "are mere matters of taste. I am very happy in waiting for you—very!" He did not again return to me for more than three hours. It was day-light. He seemed to be dreadfully unwell and fatigued. I had never seen him thus since the death of his father. He gave me, I think, almost a hundred kisses, without uttering a single word.

"You are much fatigued, dear Ponsonby," said I; "I only wish to heaven I might stay with you, and take care of you for ever."

"I have a letter for you," said Ponsonby, drawing the one which he had written at my house from his pocket, as we drove towards his own home.

"You must excuse my taking it," said I; "because, I will tell you frankly, I rather guess that it is to secure to me the provision which you have so often talked about."

He was peremptory.

"I am no liar, Ponsonby," said I; "and when I most solemnly declare to you that I will never accept of any annuity from you, unless you were to become so rich as to make one without the slightest inconvenience to yourself or your family—I hope you will believe me." I then tore the letter into many pieces, and threw it out of the coach window.

Ponsonby seemed almost ashamed of having had so little as two hundred pounds a-year to offer; but even that was not without difficulty; for he was most magnificent in his ideas of gentlemanly expenditure.

Poor fellow! He had so little of it to spend; and from delicacy, he was afraid to say more on the subject of what he considered a trifle wholly unworthy of me.

As we drew near his door, Ponsonby pressed me close to his heart. "My dear Harriette," said he, "it is indeed, as you say, very hard upon us that we may not pass the whole of our lives together; but then be assured of this truth; and I hope that it

may afford you consolation, happen what will; my affection for you, to whom I certainly owe some of the happiest hours I have ever known, will last while I exist."

The kiss which followed this declaration was as long and as ardent as our first! Yet, alas! how different the parting kiss of unfathomable anguish, given in the fervour of gaunt despair, to the first soul-thrilling embrace of wild, ardent, ecstasy, which comprehends no limits, and which, like the last, could never be forgotten by me.

Ponsonby had affected me with his more than usual melancholy, and when I was about to take my leave, I felt that I could not speak; but I kissed his hand eagerly and fervently, as he was hurrying out of the coach. . . .

I have never seen him from that hour.

On the following evening, while I was expecting Ponsonby, I received a letter from him, the purport of which was to inform me that we had parted for ever. . . .

I remember little of the style or nature of the letter. Something I read about a discovery made by Lady Ponsonby, and a solemn engagement or promise, extorted from him to see me only once more; in which interview, he had intended to have explained and arranged everything; but could not. The perusal of this letter occasioned a mist to come over my eyes, my heart seemed to swell in my bosom so as almost to produce suffocation: and yet I did not believe it to be possible that we could have parted for the last time, or surely my anguish had burst forth in one wild cry, and then all had been still for ever! !

But hope was not yet extinct. I felt stunned, more by the sudden shock of such an idea being presented to my imagination as possible, than from any conviction of its probability. Dreadful! thought I, and shuddered, while I felt a cold dew, as from the charnel-house, overspread my whole frame; shall Ponsonby refuse to speak to me, and even look upon me as a stranger, after all our communion of feeling, after all that deep interest which he evinced towards me, so late as this very morning! Nonsense! palpable, gross absurdity! How I have been frightening

myself! As if it were in human nature to be so cruel even to one's greatest enemy! And Ponsonby's nature is so kind! and then a violent hysterical affection steeped my senses in forgetfulness, and relieved, for an instant, the bitter anguish of my heart. Then I suddenly recollected his parting kiss. Gracious God! could he have left me? My brain seemed absolutely on fire. I flew to the window, where for years I had been in the habit of watching his approach. It is not high enough, thought I, and would but half destroy me. I will go to him first, and my trembling hands essayed, in vain, to fasten the ribbons of my bonnet under my chin; but no, no, I will not risk her happiness. I am not really wicked, not so very wicked as to deserve this dreadful calamity. We are sent into the world to endure the evils of it patiently, and not thus to fly into the face of our God. If he is our Father, and I kneel down to Him with patience, this anguish will be calmed.

I locked my door, and then prostrated myself, with my face on the floor, and prayed fervently for near an hour, that, if I was to see Ponsonby no more, God would take me, in mercy, out of a world of such bitter suffering, before the morning. I arose somewhat comforted; but stiff, and so cold that my whole frame trembled violently. I swallowed some lavender-drops, and tried to write; blotted twenty sheets of paper, with unintelligible nonsense, and wetted them with my tears.

The book Ponsonby last read to me now caught my eye. No sense of religion could calm or save me from the actions of despair, while these objects were before me, and, hastily wrapping my cloak about me, I hurried into the streets. I walked on with incredible swiftness, till my strength failed me, all at once, and, panting for breath, I sat down on the step of a door in Half-Moon street. The night was dark and rainy. I have a strong mind, thought I, and I will exert it to consider where I shall look for help and consolation, if Ponsonby has left me. As this thought struck me, the slow tear fell, unregarded, down my cheek. Death, was the answer my despair made me, only death can relieve me! But then what is death? How soon

the vital spark of life is destroyed in insects. The poor moth, when writhing in torture of its own seeking, how often, and how easily I have put at rest! Ponsonby's neglect, Ponsonby's late passion, his smile, and his last, long kiss, cannot torture me after this little palpitation has ceased; and I held my fingers to my throat, to ascertain the strength of what seemed all of life about me. Yet I will suffer first, and suffer long, that I may pray for God's forgiveness, only be it my consolation that this will terminate all.

Alas! vain was my reasoning. There was no consolation for me. I was bent on writing to Ponsonby. I will return home, thought I, and shut myself up in the small room he has never entered. My trembling knees could no longer support me. I tried to rise, but could not. My lips were parched, my cheeks burned, and I was very sick. God is about to grant the prayer I have made to him, thought I,—ever sanguine in what I—wished I shall die by his own will.

I grew worse, and very faint. Sickness was new to me at that time, and now a slight touch of fear came over me. Alas! methought, I am going out of the world very young, and very miserably, and before I have written to Ponsonby. He would have returned to me. He loved me, and while there was life, there was hope. I might have been so exquisitely happy as to have been pressed to his heart again! though but once more, it would have compensated an age of misery. It is but in losing him I can appreciate my late wonderful happiness. I would have been his servant, or his slave, and lived on one of his smiles for a week, as a reward for the hardest labour. What am I? what was I, that Ponsonby should devote his precious life to me? No matter what I was! As I grew still fainter, I prayed for Ponsonby's eternal happiness, as though I had felt he required my prayers.

"Vy do you set there?" inquired a man who was passing, in the accent of a Jew, and receiving no answer, after examining me attentively, he added: "Poor ting! poor girl, you are ill! don't be afraid of a poor old Jew. Tell me vat I sal do for you."

My heart was so deeply oppressed, that my strongest effort to subdue my feelings proved unsuccessful; and, at the sound of these few words, uttered in a tone of unaffected benevolence, I sobbed aloud.

"Poor ting! poor young ting! Got bless my soul (taking my hand) you are very ill, you have much fever, vat shall pe done?"

"I am really ill," said I, struggling to speak calmly, "and you will oblige me greatly, if you will have the kindness to see me to a hackney coach."

The Jew hastened to comply with my request, and with real delicacy, assisted me into the carriage he procured for me, without making a single inquiry.

Arrived at home, my housekeeper was so alarmed and struck at my altered appearance, that she, after putting me to bed, sent for Dr. Bain, who assured me that I was in a high fever, and that my recovery depended entirely on my keeping myself very quiet.

I confessed to my physician, that there was something on my mind, which agitated me so violently, that I could find no rest, till I was allowed to write a long letter. He seemed to take a strong interest in my fate; and, after vainly imploring me not to attempt it, suffered my maid to place my writing-desk before me; but alas! I could not write.

My memory began to fail me, and my head was dreadfully confused; I remarked this to Doctor Bain, as I laid down my pen.

"My dear child," said the doctor, taking my burning hand with much kindness, "your pulse is so high at this moment, that nothing but the most perfect stillness can ever restore you. Only obey my instructions for three days, and I firmly hope that your fever will have left you, and you will be able to write without difficulty, on any subject you please."

The idea of dying without having addressed Ponsonby, caused me such extreme anguish,that I submitted, like an infant, to follow the advice I received.

"Only assure me, Sir," said I, "that I shall be able to write,

to a particular friend, a very long, collected letter before I die—and my mind will become comparatively calm."

The doctor gave me all the comfort in his power, and promised to see me early in the morning.

I passed a very agitated night; I could not refrain from puzzling my poor confused brain, as to what I should write to Ponsonby. My letter was to decide my fate on earth, therefore must not be hurried, nor begun, till I had collected all the energies of my mind. I prayed that such eloquence might be granted me, as might persuade and lead Ponsonby, at least, to shew some symptoms of humanity towards me.

It was six o'clock in the morning before the strong opiate, which Dr. Bain had prescribed for me, produced any effect. At that hour, quite exhausted in mind and body, I fell into a heavy sleep, which lasted more than eight hours.

On opening my eyes I saw, at my bedside, my dear sister Fanny and Doctor Bain: the latter was feeling my pulse. I felt very much agitated at seeing Fanny there.

Doctor Bain told her that my disorder proceeded, alone, from the agitation of my mind; but it, nevertheless, had produced such violent effects, as to make it advisable for me immediately to lose some blood.

I submitted to whatever was required of me; but I begged Fanny not to tease or question me, as to what had caused all this, assuring her that I could not talk on the subject without disturbing my senses, and I was earnestly desirous of obtaining a little calm reason, if only for one hour more, that I might compose a letter before I died.

Doctor Bain, as well as my sister, said and did everything the most tender friendship could dictate. To be brief, their kind attention and my own excellent constitution triumphed over the fever, which had been very severe, during five days. In a little more than a fortnight, I left my bed; and, though reduced to the mere shadow of what I had been, I found myself sufficiently collected to address the following letter to Lord Ponsonby.

Scarcely a month has elapsed since I possessed, or believed I possessed, with health, reputed beauty, and such natural spirits, "as were wont to set the table in a roar", all my highest flights of imagination had ever conceived or dreamed of perfect happiness on earth—I had almost said, in heaven! Alas! I had not considered how unreal and fleeting must ever be the glories of this life, and I was, as a child, unprepared for the heavy affliction which has fallen on my heart like a thunder-bolt, withering all healthful verdure, and crushing its hopes for ever.

In encouraging so deep an attachment for a married man, I have indeed been very hardened; but, till now, I call my God to witness, I have never, in my life, reflected seriously on any subject. Maturity of thought, it should seem, is required earlier, by certain characters than others; for I could affirm, on my deathbed, that, hitherto, I dreamed not of injuring any one of my fellow creatures. In short, while I loved all the world, and would fain have done them all good, I most respected Lady Ponsonby. This assertion may seem scarcely credible to young females, differently educated, or of less wild and childish dispositions; but, just arisen from a sick bed, I write not to deceive.

Three weeks of bitter anguish of mind and body have changed, or rather matured my nature so completely, that even the expression of my features bears another character.

My eyes are now open, and I feel that as the mistress of a married man, possessing an innocent, amiable, young wife, I could no longer be esteemed or respected by the only being whose respect was dear to me. As lovers then, Ponsonby, we have met for the last time on earth! . . .

Here I laid down my pen; because this idea affected me.

I have delayed writing to you, till I could address you with reasonable firmness, not with the mere ravings of passion. Think you so meanly of me, dear Ponsonby, as to fancy that I could be gratified at becoming a mere instrument of pleasure to you, after my cool judgment has told me that I should thus forfeit all right to your respect or esteem? You are a man of the world, and, as

such, may confound what is termed a love-fit, with the deep affection you have, for three years, taken pains to inspire in my heart.

Love never kills, says the unfeeling world: yet, unfeeling as it may be, such a sudden desertion of your wife would have called forth, towards her, its deepest commiseration. Alas! the ceremony of marriage, read over to me by a thousand priests, could not have added one jot to my despair, while I, in vain, cast my cheerless eyes around the wide world, for a single ray of pity, which is ever denied me.

Yet the faults of my careless youth have been sanctioned, and encouraged, and shared by you, who knew well, from experience, the future anguish you were preparing for me! You elated my pride, beyond all the bounds of humility; you blessed me with more than human happiness, but to destroy my peace for ever! I was not naturally vain, but, when you have shut yourself up whole days alone, to think on our meeting and our love, till we should meet again,—when, in moments of the wildest passion, you, with all your talent, and your glorious beauty, have called me your own angelic Harriette, think you I could divest myself of delicious pride, in the object of my passion? and, if I did not believe or fancy myself an angel, perhaps my attributes as a woman were but the more appreciated by me, as you preferred them.

Enough of a subject I had determined not to touch upon. I bow with humility to the fate which compels me to resign such happiness as few, among wiser and better people, have been permitted to enjoy; and, "come what may, I have been blessed".

Had it pleased heaven to have bestowed on me the husband of my choice, there is nothing great, or good, or virtuous, that I had not aspired to: as it is, I am a poor fallen wretch, who ask of your compassion one line, or one word of consolation, to save me from despair.

Oh! I have known such moments of deep anguish, as I could never describe to you. Ponsonby, my dear Ponsonby! I throw myself on my knees before you; I raise the eyes you have so often professed to love and admire, now disfigured and half closed by

constant weeping, towards heaven, and I ask of God to soften your heart, that you may not torture me beyond my strength. Recal, then, those dreadful words,—we must part now, Harriette, and for ever! I too am a woman, and Lady Ponsonby desires not my death.

Trust me, the errors and little weaknesses which humanity dictates, shall be found more acceptable in the eyes of God, than such stoical virtue as results from hardness of heart.

If I survive the punishment you have declared I must submit to, it will be by the strength of my constitution, which shall be proof against an age of anguish! My heart was ever warm, and unusually affectionate. I ask but to live yet for you, not with you. I would but obtain your approbation, as a reward for my earnest endeavours to do right, and obtain for myself an existence, by my own industry, if ever my former health and strength should be restored to me.

When you come and speak to me of what is right and virtuous, shall I not love virtue for your sake? Have I ever wished to disobey you? I do not ask you to visit me alone. Call on me with Lord Jersey. Come soon, and give but the assurance that still and for ever you will be all to me that honour and virtue permits; that once in every year, while I act virtuously, you will visit me, and encourage me with your friendship and approbation.

I am overpowered with faintness and fatigue, else I had many, many more arguments to urge. Hope, almost life, hangs on your answer; therefore, dear Ponsonby, be merciful, and so may God bless you!

HARRIETTE.

My mind was very much relieved after I had dispatched my letter; for I considered that I should certainly hear from Lord Ponsonby, if he possessed one spark of feeling toward me; and if he did not, of course my respect and affection must naturally abate.

I watched for the appearance of the postman, who usually brought my letters, from morning till night, with indescribable emotion; nor did I cease to hope, for a whole week. At last, however, I was convinced that the epistle, which had cost me so

much labour of thought, was indeed entirely disregarded by the person on whom, I expected, it would have made a deep impression.

Somewhat of an indignant feeling began to take the place of affection. All my woman's pride was roused, and yet, methought this man, so cruelly unfeeling to me now, has watched my slumbers in breathless silence, and still he smiles, with the same brilliant expression, on others, and all about him are impressed with that dignified air of true nobility, that high reserve so delightfully and condescendingly thrown aside, in favour of the few who please him.

A slow, intermitting fever began to prey on my constitution. I felt a violent oppression of the chest, which increased so rapidly, in spite of all my kind friend, Doctor Bain could do for me, that, in less than a month after I had addressed my last letter to Ponsonby, I could never find breath sufficient to enable me to ascend the stairs to my bed-chamber, without sitting down to rest more than once. I began to hate society; above all, I avoided anything like gaiety.

It was now that I believed in all I had heard, as to the wretchedness of this life, and I wanted to reconcile myself to my God. I will pass my heavy hours in doing the little good to my fellow-creatures, in my power, said I, one day, as I recollected my former slight acquaintance with a woman whom I knew to have been lately taken to Newgate for rather a heavy debt. She was Lord Craven's housekeeper, during the time I had lived with him at Brighton.

I ordered my carriage to the Debtors' door of Newgate. My mind was so deeply absorbed with one object, that the misery I saw there did not much affect me. The poor woman, Mrs. Butler, was surprised and delighted to see me.

"I wish I could pay your debt," said I, panting for breath, as usual, and speaking with pain and difficulty.

"My dear, dear young lady," said Mrs. Butler, looking at me with much compassion, "what has happened to that sweet, merry, blooming face of yours?"

It only required a single word, uttered in a tone of sympathy, to bring the ready tears into my eyes. Mine now fell, disregarded by me, down my pale cheek. "You," returned I, "are not the only person in affliction; but never mind, talk to me, my good woman, of anything except my unhappiness. I cannot pay your debt, with common justice to my own creditors; but this trifle I can spare, and you are very welcome to it." I then placed in her hand all I, at that moment, possessed in the world, except a single one pound note.

Mrs. Butler really was, what she appeared, very grateful. I sat an hour with her, and promised constantly to visit her, and provide for all her little wants, as long as she continued in prison. When I was taking my leave, just as the last bell was about to ring, which was to exclude all strangers for the night, I observed an interesting young girl, of about fourteen years of age, in one corner of the room, weeping bitterly; near her sat an elderly lady, apparently in much affliction. A working man was in the act of making up a large bundle, out of I knew not what.

"Those poor people are in great affliction," said Mrs. Butler, observing what had fixed my attention. "The mother has seen better days; they have hitherto contrived to pay 3s. 6d. a week for the hire of their bed, which that man is now taking away, because their means are exhausted." I was instantly about to desire the man to put down the bed, when prudence whispered in my ear, that I had just given all I possessed but a single pound note. No matter, thought I, taking out my purse, poverty cannot add to such affliction of the mind as mine is. Again I paused. This lady has seen better days, and must be treated with more delicacy. I hastened towards her, and taking, hold of her hand, to place my bank note in it, I whispered in her ear, my request that she would do me the favour to make use of that trifle, and, without waiting her answer, I hurried on after the man, who was now disappearing with the poor woman's mattress and bedclothes, and desired him to return with them.

The next morning I was surprised by a visit from the Duke

of Wellington, who had, unexpectedly, arrived from the Continent the night before.

"How do you do? what have you been about?" asked His Grace: then, fixing his eyes on my pale, thin, careworn face, he absolutely started, as though he had seen the ghost of some man he had killed, honestly of course!

"What the devil is the matter?" inquired Wellington.

"Something has affected me deeply," answered I, my eyes again filling with tears, "and I have been ill for more than two months."

"Poor girl!" said Wellington, as though he really would have pitied me, had he but known how, and then added, "I always dreaded your getting into some scrape. Do you recollect I told you so? How much money do you want?" said this man of sentiment, drawing near the table, and taking up my pen to write a draft.

"I have no money," I replied, "not a single shilling; but this is not the cause of my sufferings."

"Nonsense, nonsense," rejoined Wellington, writing me a check. "Where the devil is Argyle? Why do not you make him pay your debts? I will give you what I can afford now, and you must write to me, as usual, at Thomas's Hotel, if this is not sufficient.

"Good God! how thin you are grown! Were you sorry I left you? I remember you shed tears when I told you I was off for Spain. I am a cold sort of fellow. I dare say you think so, and yet, I have not forgotten that either: because there is no humbug about you; and, when you cry, you are sorry, I believe. I have thought of you, very often, in Spain; particularly one night, I remember, I dreamed you came out on my staff."

Wellington consoled me as well as he could, and sat with me nearly three hours. His visit made no impression on me, except that I was grateful for his kindness in leaving me the money I wanted.

The oppression on my chest increased daily, and I became so reduced as to excite the commiseration of a kind, opposite,

neighbour, who sent over her footman to know if the poor young creature she saw from her window, and who appeared so very ill, had proper advice, and friends in town to take care of her?

My grief seemed now to settle in deep despondency. I considered my late intimacy with Ponsonby as unreal mockery, a bright vision of the fancy. I believed that, were he suddenly to appear again before me, I should instantly expire. Doctor Bain, I know, believed that my symptoms bordered on a decline, and he wished me to try Italy.

In about a week, I paid a second visit to Mrs. Butler, although my trembling limbs could scarcely support me up the stairs of the prison; and, when I entered, I was absolutely speechless with the effort for nearly a quarter of an hour. Mrs. Butler was all gratitude, while expressing the concern I believe she felt, lest I should injure myself by venturing out in such a miserable state of health.

Observing in the room, several women, who appeared to examine me with much impertinent curiosity, I asked Mrs. Butler if she knew what it meant?

"Why," said Mrs. Butler, "that woman, whose bed they were taking away from her, when you noticed her last week, knows you, and has been malicious enough to tell all the room, that you are a mere kept mistress, with whom she should be ashamed to converse."

I threw on the stranger, to whom I had given my very last pound, a hasty and indignant glance; but, neither the expression, nor the colour of anger, would dwell on a cheek bloodless as mine, and I might apply to myself, what Sterne said of his poor old monk, that nature had done with its resentments.

I never injured any of those women, reflected I, with meek resignation; but God will be kinder to me, and to my errors, than they are!

I offered all the little comforts in my power to Mrs. Butler, and then my health obliged me take my leave. As I passed close to the woman into whose hands I had placed my pound-note,

she smiled and curtsied affectedly. I fixed my sunk eyes, for an instant, on her face, and then withdrew them, more in sorrow than in anger.

I lingered thus, for about two months, without any visible change in my health or spirits, except that I grew weaker and thinner every day. All the kindness which could be administered to a mind diseased, I received from my mother and sister Fanny.

About this time, the Duke of Argyle arrived from Scotland. He was, no doubt, greatly shocked to see me so ill, although the cause of my melancholy state of mind being known to him, did not either flatter or interest him; more particularly as he had often himself remarked to me, that he wondered any woman alive could resist Lord Ponsonby.

I had always liked Argyle, and was glad to see him, and should have indeed found much consolation in his society, but that he loved to trifle with my distress, as it regarded Lord Ponsonby.

"I have just dined with Ponsonby," said Argyle to me one night, "and I never saw him look better. He shewed me a letter containing an invitation from that nasty sister of yours, Amy, who wanted to have me last year."

That way madness lies: I could not listen to another word. I was rushing past Argyle, when he detained me, frightened at the wildness of my looks.

"It is all a joke, you credulous little fool," said he, running after me.

"I cannot run," said I, turning round, and panting for breath. "Pray, pray, leave me now. You torture me by staying. Come this evening, and I shall thank you for your visit." It was long before I could induce him to leave me.

The moment I was alone, I dispatched the following note to Lord Ponsonby:

I thank you that you renounced my prayers; for thus you cured me of half my esteem. It was my fixed determination never to intrude myself again on your attention; but the Duke of Argyle has mentioned to me this morning, my sister Amy having written to

you. Once more then, Ponsonby, I implore you, as you would save me from self-destruction, satisfy my wretched mind, in what cannot injure Lady Ponsonby. Declare to me—nobody has or shall. . . . Ponsonby, I am addressing you for the last time. Have mercy on the dreadful agitation of my mind, and answer me directly. You are quite happy, Argyle says; and I, in the very flower of my age, am dying. One line can relieve me, perhaps, from madness! Your watch, chain and ring, are sealed up. I could not look on them. I never shall again; my poor eyes have looked their last on them, and you; and I shall never write to you again; therefore, God bless you! When age shall overtake you, in some moment of affliction, perhaps you will remember me, and what I could have been to you. Adieu.

I dispatched my letter, almost without hope. If he could resist the other, thought I, this is more stupid, and less likely to affect him.

The agitation Argyle's stay had occasioned, produced an increase of fever. Towards night, I began to think seriously of dying, and not without reason, being reduced to a mere skeleton, and having now been afflicted with cough and extreme difficulty of respiration for almost five months. There is a restlessness in all disorders of the mind, which the sufferer imagines can be best relieved by exercise. About nine o'clock, having read the New Testament for several hours, I felt a strange desire to behold the outside of Lord Ponsonby's house, once again before I died. I had avoided passing within a mile of it, since he had left me, and this night I fancied something good would turn up from going there, if I could but find strength to accomplish my design. To have mentioned it to my housekeeper would have been, at once, to put it out of the question. I really believe she would have locked me into my room, while she had sent for my sister and Doctor Bain; therefore, getting rid of her and of my footman, I gained a hackney-coach, unobserved, and was set down in Park-Lane, very near Lord Ponsonby's house. It was a fine, mild evening, and the watchman was calling the hour of ten. I was terribly afraid of

him, and my breath failed me, when I tried to hasten out of his way. I wandered about till I could stand no longer, and with difficulty, contrived to obtain a seat on the steps of a large portico-door.

The atmosphere now began to threaten rain, which soon fell in torrents. A poor shivering girl sought shelter by my side. She was coughing most dreadfully, and her breath was still more oppressed than my own. That cough, thought I, is not feigned, and, perhaps this wretched creature is thus nightly exposed to the inclement weather, to obtain existence by the prostitution of her person to unfeeling and drunken strangers, and what am I, that I should turn my back on a sister in affliction? I immediately inquired of her why she left her home, with such a dreadful cough?

The poor creature turned her head towards me in much apparent surprise. She was not beautiful, nor was she rouged, and her dress was rather neat than tawdry. The set characters of death appeared to me to be stamped on features which once had been very lovely.

"I have no home," was the poor girl's answer. "I had half a bed, till last night," added she, "but you see what I suffer, and, therefore, being unable to obtain a single shilling, they have turned me into the streets."

"Dreadful! dreadful!" I ejaculated. "Good God! how could you ever degrade yourself thus? What labour would not have been preferable at the beginning!"

The poor creature interrupted me with loud sobs, which produced such a dreadful fit of coughing, I thought that she would have expired on the spot.

"Good heavens!" said I, "what is to be done? I am so very weak myself, that I cannot help you, or seek for a coach to carry us home; but when the watchman passes us, I will send him for one, and take you with me, and have you put into a warm bed, and see you taken care of. When I have done all this, I do not think you will swear at me, or frighten me, or ill-use me, will you?" added I, taking hold of her hand. "I am sure you would

not, you could not, nobody could, if they knew but half how wretched I am."

The poor creature fell on her knees before me and strove in vain to express her gratitude, with wild incoherency. I never saw anyone thus affected.

"My poor young woman," said I, exerting my strength to raise her, "you must have met with very hard hearts to be thus surprised and overpowered by a little common humanity towards a poor fellow-creature in distress. Pray be calm, that we may cure you, and give you an opportunity of making amends for your past life, by becoming a useful and respected member of society."

Before I could contrive to get the poor creature placed in a hackney-coach, which the watchman procured, she had fainted, and was still insensible when, at past one in the morning, I arrived at my own house.

My footman was, at that instant, setting off for my sister and Doctor Bain; and my good housekeeper was in tears.

"Do not agitate me," said I, "with your questions and all this bustle; I am too ill to endure them; but this distressed object, whom I have met with by mere accident, is worse than I am and more in want of your care. Never mind who or what she is; but pray get her to bed, and see that she has all she requires. Tell her, I wish that I could attend her myself; but I am not able."

My good old servant, knowing well how contradiction always irritated me, sent my house-maid to undress me, and hastened to obey my commands.

In about an hour she returned to acquaint me that the poor young girl had fallen asleep, completely worn out with fatigue. "Poor soul!" continued my housekeeper, "she is not long for this world, I fear; yet she is as gentle as a lamb, and nothing like a vulgar or a bad word comes out of her mouth."

My mind was a good deal relieved at this account of my protegée, and I tried to compose myself to rest. It was not, however, till eight o'clock in the morning that I could close my

eyes, and at eleven, I put on my dressing-gown, and went to visit the poor invalid. By the first glance on her emaciated countenance, I felt persuaded that nothing would save her, though the poor young woman herself appeared very sanguine.

"If it should please God, my dear lady, to spare me a little longer, you shall never, never have to regret your great goodness. I have not long led this dreadful life. It is scarcely two years ago since I lived, as nurserymaid, in a respectable family, where I was a great favourite. There, madam, I became acquainted with a young tradesman, who professed a desire to make me his wife. We kept company, for nearly a twelvemonth. He always told me, he thought it would be prudent to delay our marriage, from day to day, as he was in hourly expectation of the arrival of his father, whose consent he was sure of obtaining, although he should have to dread his displeasure, were he to marry me without it. At last I discovered, by the merest accident, that this man had a wife, to whom he had been married four years, as well as three fine young children. I immediately left my place, to avoid meeting with him again. My mistress strongly recommended me to a friend of her own, as nurse to her infant daughter; but grief preyed so on my mind that I could not give satisfaction in my situation.

"I was shortly afterwards afflicted with this terrible cough. To drown the anguish of my mind, I got into bad company, and, having lost my character as well as my health, I have, for the last four months, been reduced to eat the bread of prostitution.

"I have been vainly trying to get into one of the hospitals; but there are no hopes of that," said the poor creature, her tears falling fast down her pale cheeks, "for they say that mine is an incurable disorder, which they do not want to be troubled with."

"What unfeeling creatures," said I, "but do not fret, poor soul, or despair. While there is life, there is hope. If I cannot get you into an hospital where you shall have, from me, linen, tea, wine, and all you may require, you shall be at least as well off in my house; so keep yourself quiet. While I live, and you do your duty, you shall never want a friend; and if we both die,

shortly, as may happen, let us hope that God will be found an indulgent father instead of a severe judge, and will receive us into a better world."

The poor creature absolutely seemed to forget her own severe sufferings, while endeavouring to think of what would best relieve mine.

In the course of the morning, Dr. Bain prescribed for her, and promised to bring me a letter for her admittance into St. George's Hospital. On the next morning, when the poor creature was admitted into that Institution, she fainted from excess of joy and gratitude.

Soon after the departure of my protegée, my servant brought me a letter, by the twopenny post; the handwriting was Lord Ponsonby's. Gracious heavens, how my heart beat! I could not open it. I kissed it a thousand times, placed it next my heart—thought I should never have found courage to read it, and when I did, at last, in fear and trembling, for I had begun to doubt the probability of any good happening to me on earth, it was as follows—very short and not particularly sweet:

Why, dearest, will you consider these things so seriously? Upon my honour, upon my soul, I can say no, in reply to your question; and you may tell the Duke of Argyle that he is mistaken, if he thinks me happy. Do you remember what I said to you at our last meeting? and will you do me the justice to believe I did not deceive you? pray do. Adieu.

PONSONBY.

Does this man love me? thought I, half wild with the delightful idea, and shall we not meet again? Impossible! As friends, at least, we must, shall meet, or I will die in the attempt.

The letter gave me new life, I imagined myself cured. Gay visions of departed happiness filled my imagination. I placed myself before the glass, to contemplate the havoc which sickness and anxiety had made on my features, and sighed heavily. No matter! vanity whispered, I am more interesting; though not half so brilliant; and then I hoped he would not love me less for

the suffering his neglect had occasioned me. This world, said I, is a blank without him. I have endeavoured and prayed for tranquillity of mind in vain, during many long months, which yet have brought me no consolation. Too well I know I must renounce him as a lover; but for ever out of his sight, I cannot exist, and longer, I will not. I will take him by surprise. I will wait for hours, days, years at his door; but I will hear his voice once more. Shall I continue to suffer thus for what his footmen, tradesmen and valet, enjoy freely every day?

I, who would sign my own death-warrant, but once again to kiss the dear hand which inscribed this beautiful little note! What have I done, so very wicked, that I may not ever again behold him? I will wait at his door, every night that I can ascertain he is from home, and, the first time he happens to return on foot, I cannot fail to see him; and one word he must say to me, if it is but to order me home. Something like the man who boasted of having been addressed by the Emperor Bonaparte: What did he say to you? somebody asked. *Va t'en, coquin*, answered this true Christian.

Well then, to conclude, since I am sure my readers are growing as tired of this dismal love-story as I am, I wandered, nightly, round Lord Ponsonby's house, which I believe I have said was now at the corner of Upper Brook Street, in Park Lane, for nearly a fortnight, to no purpose. He returned not before daylight, when I dared not shew myself, or he either came in his carriage, or had not left his house. The night air so increased my cough, that, God knows where I found strength for these wild nocturnal promenades; but love does wonders! I passed the whole day, coughing, in bed, to obtain strength, at least to die at his door: for I had taken an oath to behold Ponsonby again, or die in the attempt.

One night, dread of observation from the watchman, or insult from the passing strangers, made me parade slowly on, the opposite side of the street, before his house. The moon was shining beautifully, at near one in the morning. A magnificent, tall, elegant man, habited in black, turned hastily round the

corner, from Park Lane, and knocked loudly at Ponsonby's door. Could I be mistaken? I felt, in every drop of my thrilling blood, and at the bottom of my heart, that it was Ponsonby, almost before I had caught a glimpse of him; and, darting across the street, with the light swiftness of former times, alas! *ils étoient passés, ces jours de fêtes là.* A bar of iron, across my chest, seemed to arrest my flight, and I was compelled to stand quite still for an instant. That instant decided my fate. I obtained Ponsonby's dwelling, as the porter shut him out from my sight. The anguish of that moment I will not to attempt describe.

My mouth immediately filled with blood. Whether this was the effect of mental suffering, or whether I had done myself an internal injury by over-exertion, I know not; nor do I scarcely recollect how I happened to find myself in a hackney-coach. All I know, for certain, as to the adventures of that miserable night, is, that I opened my eyes, at five in the morning, to behold Dr. Blain and a surgeon, who was binding up my arm to bleed me, my sister Fanny, in tears, and the Duke of Argyle, who stood at the foot of my bed, consulting with Doctor Bain. I know not why the kind scarlet fever attacked me in the midst of all my troubles; but that was the disorder under which I suffered.

I will not dwell on what I endured, during a fortnight; indeed, as I was so frequently delirious, I knew little about it.

At the end of that time, however, my life was despaired of; but, in a few days, the disorder took a favourable turn, and after lingering six weeks, during which I had full time to reflect on all the follies I had indulged in, and having, for more than a week, been desired by Doctor Bain to prepare my mind for death, my late passion assumed the character of madness. I considered Ponsonby's conduct, towards myself and his wife, as equally heartless, and undeserved by all I had suffered for him. I earnestly prayed that he might, hereafter, make his lady amends for the former neglect I had occasioned her. I no longer desired to see him. I have suffered too much, I often thought to myself, and will not dwell on the occasion of it, lest I lose sight of that

charitable spirit towards all mankind, in which I hope to die. Were he, now, in that room, waiting to see me, I should desire him to return to his home, and leave me to die in peace. I hoped that God would not be as deaf to his last prayers, as he had been to mine. I sent his watch, chain, and ring, to Amy, to do exactly what she pleased with. I never mentioned Lord Ponsonby, but once, during my last illness; it was addressing Fanny: "If ever you meet with him after my death, tell him that I forgave him"; and for his wife's sake, as well as for his own, I prayed that God would mend his heart; but that I felt no desire to see him, or to take my final leave of him.

During this severe illness, the Duke of Argyle was very attentive to me. He was now the only man living for whom I felt the least interest. My sister Amy knew this, as well as all my late suffering; yet I was scarcely considered convalescent when she made a desperate attack on Argyle's heart, and which he complained of, to me, in terms of strong disgust. One night, in particular, before I had left my room, he came to me after the opera.

"I have had a narrow escape," said Argyle.

"From what?" I asked.

"A rape!" was his reply.

"Who then, in this land of plenty," said I, "is so very hard up?"

"Your sister Amy," returned Argyle. "She asked me to see her to a coach; then insisted on setting me down,—drove me, *bongré malgré*, to her house; and would make me walk upstairs and sup with her. I was as obstinate as a stoic. 'Why, where are you going?' inquired your sister Amy. 'To a sick relation of yours,' was my answer; at which Amy looked like a fury, as she wished me a good night."

"How you abuse her," said I. "Really, you seem to have entirely forgotten our relationship."

"Why," added Argyle, "she sets me the example."

I fought Amy's battles as long and as earnestly as though she had really loved me, assuring Argyle that she was not bold, and had been kind to but very few lovers.

Argyle, no doubt, from all I said, began to think he had made a valuable conquest, and, rather than the poor thing should die, and appear at his bedside afterwards, like unfortunate Miss Bailey, I suppose he determined to look at her again, the next time he met her.

At that period, I believe he could have attached himself to me very sincerely, more so than formerly. His old friend, Lady W—— was in a very bad state of health, and was not expected to live. Argyle lamented the prospect of her loss, with real friendship, and would have found consolation in my society, but for my late desperate passion for another; which, however, I should soon have overcome, now that all was still, and calm, and quiet about the region of my heart. This calm was heaven to a poor wretch who had undergone so much mental suffering. I could not account for it; or rather, I could still less account for all my former misery.

As soon as I was able to converse, I inquired after my poor protegée at St. George's Hospital. My housekeeper informed me that she still lingered, in a very hopeless state. The idea of dying without seeing me again appeared to affect her much. I desired my housekeeper to carry her everything she wanted, and to assure her that my very first visit should be to her, the moment Doctor Bain would permit me to leave the house. That very kind friend had so reasoned with me, about the sin and folly of trifling, as I had done hitherto, with the blessings of health, that I had passed my word to obey him in everything, on pain of incurring his lasting displeasure.

On the very first day I received permission to go out, while my carriage was waiting at the door, I was shocked by a most melancholy scene. The poor young creature, from St. George's Hospital, having resisted the persuasions and threats of the matrons, declaring that she would see me before she died, drove up to my door in a hackney-coach, literally in the agonies of death! My landlord, who had just called for his rent, hearing, from my servants, that a dying woman was come to me from the hospital, declared that she should not enter his house. What

was to be done? We were all women, and could not contend. My footman would have had her brought in by force; but force was the very thing in which the most particlerst man as is, was most deficient. The poor creature held out her hands, entreating me, for the love of God, not to send her away from me, in her last moments. The scene was indeed disgraceful to humanity, and I was very much affected by it; but how could I help it; the landlord insisted she should not come in. There was no time to be lost, she must go to the workhouse.

"We will lose no time in contention with this unfeeling wretch," said I, "but I will go with you to the workhouse, and nurse you."

"God bless you! God bless you!" exclaimed the poor dying creature, faintly. "I am not afraid of dying while you are with me."

I will not dwell on a scene which, even at this distant period, I cannot remember without shuddering. In less than an hour after my poor protegée was placed on a miserable couch, in Marylebone workhouse, she expired in my arms, earnestly and piously recommending her soul to God.

CHAPTER VII

My health suffered much from this shock, and it was more than a week after the poor girl's death, before I could again venture to leave the house. My sister Fanny at last prevailed on me to go and pass the day with her. There I met Julia, who had forgotten her constant swain, Colonel Cotton, though he still appeared to adore her. She had fallen madly in love with Sir Harry Mildmay, who, for a short time, seemed to return her passion, and was really attentive to her, till somebody at Melton Mowbray asked him, one day, what the deuce he was doing with an old woman who might be his mother? All the love Mildmay ever felt, for any daughter of Eve, originated in vanity, and was fed and nourished by vanity; therefore, I need not add that he cut Julia from that hour, and, from that hour Julia's passion for him regularly increased; although it was unmixed or unpurified by the least atom of affection.

I inquired after Sophia, who had not been permitted to visit me; because the scarlet fever was considered infectious. She was still living in the shabby, confined lodging Deerhurst had provided for her, and Deerhurst also continued to provide her with currant wine and raisin wine! He saw but little of her, and the less the better for the taste of Sophia, who declared that water was by no means an indispensible requisite at that nobleman's toilette. In short, he was as much afraid of it as though he had been bitten by a mad dog.

I desired to know who consoled her for Deerhurst's dirtiness, and Deerhurst's neglect, and was told, by Fanny, that Colonel Berkeley tried hard to make himself agreeable; to which Julia added: "He is there from morning till night."

"And how does Sophia like him?"

"She dislikes him particularly. Henry De Roos is less disagreeable to her, I believe; but Sophia does not trouble her head, for an instant, about any man; only she really does wish that Deerhurst would wash himself a little more, and in particular his head."

Fanny went on to say, that somebody told him what Sophia said, on this subject, and Deerhurst, having accused her of circulating these stories out of school, asked her if he was not remarkably nice in his person?

"I think so," Sophia answered, "very nice indeed, I always said so."

Being still very weak, I left them early in the evening, and, passing by Amy's door on my road home, I observed a carriage waiting, very like the Duke of Argyle's. I could not possibly be in love with Argyle, that was very certain. I had of late given too many absurd proofs of love for another; and yet I had never ceased to admire and like him. He had lately been my sole friend, and his attention had promoted my recovery. In short, my nerves had undergone a shock which, to this day, I have not recovered, nor ever have I enjoyed, nor shall I, most probably, enjoy another hour's health.

At that time a mere nothing affected me. I hastily pulled the check-string, and requested my servant to inquire of the coachman, if that was really the equipage of His Grace. He was answered in the affirmative. I am ashamed to confess how much, and how long, this circumstance affected me. It was painful to my heart to acknowledge a sister so unnatural, and it caused another relapse. Amy heard the occasion of it, and, sporting fine feelings, one fine morning, after having, by my kind recommendation, lived with Argyle more than a month, and become pregnant by him, she came suddenly into my room, and observing my deathlike aspect, began to blubber downright!

Hypocrisy was ever disgusting to me. I had in full, warm, sisterly confidence, introduced her to the Duke, and praised her to him, till I changed his disgust into something like partiality;

dressed her up in my own elegant clothes, because hers were always as shabby as they were shewy, in the style of her black-pudding dinners and champagne suppers; and she intruded herself into my house, warm from the embraces of my lover, to shew off tenderness! I experienced a sudden fit of rage, almost amounting to madness.

"You disgusting, deceitful creature!" I exclaimed, locking her in my room, and taking out the key; "since you have forced your company on me, you shall repent it." I then looked round for some instrument to execute vengeance! ! !

Readers, can you conceive anything half so monstrous, half so ruinous to black-pudding men, so destructive to the rising generation?

I was just thinking about killing her!

Amy opened the window, and called out to a boy in the street, that a wicked woman, who was no better than she should be, had locked her in.

"I shouldn't wonder," answered the boy, laughing and running away, "a pair of you, no doubt!"

I by this time was heartily ashamed of having been thus surprised into temporary madness, owing to the extreme irritability of my nerves.

"Go out of the house," said I, "for God's sake; there is something too indelicate and disgusting in your pity. You are very welcome to live with Argyle, if you can endure the idea. I certainly felt the loss of a friend, in my present low nervous state; but His Grace knows well that I have been in love with another for the last three years, one on whom your soft circular effusions made not the slightest impression, unless of disgust."

I hastened out of the room, and locked myself into my bedchamber. Amy's visit, I afterwards found, was in consequence of the anxiety Argyle had expressed concerning my health, and Amy guessed that she must show off sisterly affection, or Argyle would dislike her!

The next day Argyle visited me. He was very melancholy, and had scarcely shaved since Lady W——'s death, which had

lately taken place. He reminded me that, when he dearly loved me, I never *gênée'd* myself or him; that he was now unhappy and could have devoted himself to me; but that he saw no hopes of a steady return.

"Yes! but then a sister!" said I, "the idea, to me, is so disgusting—but do not let us dwell on it, I forgive anything in your conduct which has caused me pain, and destroyed the possibility of our ever being more than friends, for the rest of our lives—and yet, I trust, we shall never be less. A very trifle affects me now; so do not be too vain, nor attribute to sentiment what is due to the scarlet fever. You believed me incapable of steady regard; because I did not fix my undivided affections on you after I had learned, from your own letter, now in my possession, that you could not be wholly mine. Is that fair, or rather are not you a terrible coxcomb, master Argyle?

"*Apropos*, for here must end all sentiment between us, so, to talk of something else, Mr. Colman accuses you of having cut him dead in the Park yesterday, when he bowed to you."

"What a vulgar fellow!" Argyle remarked.

"Why vulgar?"

"It is a vulgar idea, and one which certainly never occurred to me; not because I happen to be Duke of Argyle; for a private gentleman's rank, in society, is the same as mine; therefore, what right have I to cut him? or what right would any duke have to cut a private gentleman? If a man does not return my bow, I take it for granted he is absent or not in the humour, or thinking of something else. Tell Mr. Colman he is an ass, my dear pretty."

"Argyle!" interrupted I, "no more dear prettys, if you please. I have left off being pretty; but, thank God, I am heartwhole, and propose remaining so to the end of my natural life. Nevertheless, whatever the cause may be, I am truly sorry to see you so changed, and so melancholy."

"Thank you," returned Argyle, sighing. "Then oblige me and don't tell anybody in the world that I am unhappy."

His Grace seemed to leave me with regret. I did not invite him to repeat his visit.

My health, soon after this, began to improve rapidly. My late fever seemed to have carried away all the oppression on my chest, except what was the mere effect of debility.

I took an early opportunity of paying Sophia a visit, and I had scarcely time to inquire after that young lady's *petite société*, before Colonel Berkeley was announced. It was in the evening, at about eight o'clock. He was very lively and agreeable, which I think was generally the case with him. The man bears an indifferent character, and perhaps with some reason; but I have always seen him pleasant, and I never knew or heard of his breaking his word. His fancy for Sophia did not prevent his being polite and attentive to me, as often happens with ill-bred young men of the present day.

In less than half an hour after Colonel Berkeley's arrival, in bounced Lord Deerhurst, in an agony of tears! !

"Oh Sophy! Sophy!" exclaimed His Lordship, blubbering and wiping his eyes with a very dirty, little, old red pocket-handkerchief—"Oh Sophy, I never thought you would have used me in this way! !"

Sophy declared herself innocent, which was indeed the fact, as far as regarded Colonel Berkeley.

"I cannot bear it," continued Deerhurst, rushing out of the room, like the strolling representative of a tragic king in a barn, and, seating himself on the stairs near, the street door, to sob and blubber more at his ease.

Colonel Berkeley looked at his lordship, in utter astonishment, exclaiming, "My good fellow, what the devil is the matter?"

"Why! did you not——" he paused.

"Did he not what?" I asked.

"Oh, Lord! oh, dear!" roared out Deerhurst.

"Don't take on so, my lord," interposed Sophia's fat landlady, offering his lordship a glass of water.

Deerhurst accepted it with apparent gratitude, as though quite subdued.

"Could you have believed it, madam?" said he. "Did you believe that young creature was so depraved?"

"What do you mean by depraved?" I asked. "Why, I can answer for it, Sophia has never given Colonel Berkeley the slightest encouragement, and beyond a mere yes or no, she never opens her lips to him."

"Oh! don't tell me! don't tell me!" still blubbered his lordship, the big tears rolling down his cheeks.

"This is incredibly astonishing!" ejaculated Colonel Berkeley, in a very natural tone of surprise.

"What is incredibly astonishing?" I asked. "I am determined to understand this. In fact, I think I have guessed already. Lord Deerhurst, by the restoration of his annuity will put two hundred pounds a year into his pocket on Sophia's first act of infidelity. You are his friend, and have done nothing but express your astonishment at his lordship's tears and apparent jealousy, ever since he came blubbering into the room; therefore, since his arrival so quickly succeeded yours, I will lay my life, you two desperate *mauvais sujets* came here together."

"Nonsense!" replied Colonel Berkeley, laughing.

"I am now sure of it," added I.

Colonel Berkeley slily nodded assent to my remark.

Deerhurst was smelling a bottle of hartshorn, which Sophia's landlady held fast, to the end of his nose. Berkeley addressed Sophia, in a whisper. Deerhurst jumped up, like a madman, and was leaving the room.

"My good fellow," said the Colonel, taking Lord Deerhurst by the arm, for this excellent acting had really deceived even Berkeley himself, whom his lordship had brought to Sophia's door in his own carriage, for the express purpose of taking her off his hands, "if you really are annoyed at my visit, if you have changed your mind—only say so, and I give you my word I will not call on Sophia again. Be a man! don't make this noise and bellowing; but tell me, frankly, what you wish. You and I are old friends."

Deerhurst said that his feelings were wounded and his heart-strings cracked; therefore he must go home and get them mended: and he darted out of the house.

"What the deuce can all this mean?" said Berkeley. "The man really is unhappy. I must go after him."

"Take me with you," I said, "just to gratify my curiosity."

"With all my heart," replied Berkeley, "if my carriage is at the door."

"Did not you drive here in it?" "No," whispered he, "Deerhurst brought me with him, and I desired my coachman to follow, with my vis-à-vis."

We found it at the door, and were set down at Lord Deerhurst's house in Half Moon Street.

We were shewn into the drawing-room, where, after waiting about five minutes, His Lordship half opened the door of his bedroom, which was the one adjoining, and showed us such a merry-looking face, *qu'il n'étoit plus réconnoissable.*

"Glad to see you both," said his lordship, wiping his hands with a very dirty towel. "Will you come in? But you must excuse the disorder. You know it is a mere bachelor's room," continued he, lighting a long tallow-candle, by a short piece, which was burning in a broken candlestick.

"Why don't you ride and tie, regularly, with your two muttons," said I, "when you want to be economical? and then no one would know they had not been allowed to burn on together with an equal flame, like you and Sophia."

"Oh Lord!" said Deerhurst, laughing, "I can't cry any more at this moment, for I have just washed my face."

"But seriously," Colonel Berkeley observed, "I have followed you, because, upon my soul, I do not understand you. I want to know whether my attentions to Sophia are really disagreeable; for I don't see how a man could command so many tears to flow at pleasure."

"Oh! there was a boy at Westminster could cry a great deal better than I can," said Deerhurst.

"I won't believe you," retorted Berkeley, laughing, "unless you'll sit down on that chair and favour me with another cry; and first ring for some proper candles, will you? How came these stinking butchers' candles in your room?"

"Bachelor, you know, bachelor!" said Deerhurst, grinning.

"What the devil has that to do with it?" exclaimed Berkeley.

Deerhurst excused himself, declaring that tears, even sham ones, must be spontaneous; "and yet," said he, sinking into an armchair, and again taking out the self-same dirty little red calico pocket-handkerchief, "and yet, though I appear a wild, profligate, hardened young man, I never think of that sweet girl, Sophia, without its bringing tears into my eyes": and he blubbered aloud, and again the big tear rolled down his cheeks.

"This would melt a heart of stone," I observed, putting on my cloak, "so I am off."

"What! won't you have any more?" said Deerhurst, jumping up and laughing.

"Capital!" exclaimed Berkeley, taking up his hat.

"Why, you are not going to trust yourself in that rake's carriage alone?" said Deerhurst to me.

"I am afraid there is no danger," answered I.

"Some of the most virtuous ladies in England have been attacked by the gay colonel, until they have called out murder; and two of them lost their diamond brooches, coming from the opera, before they could get hold of the check-string,——"

"Or cry out, stop thief!" added I. "For my part I have more reasons than one for believing the Colonel to be very harmless in a carriage, or I should not have ventured. I, too, have heard of his gallant feats of prowess, in chariots and vis-à-vis! but I will tell you a story: There was a pretty, elegant French woman joined my party, one night, after the opera, and explained to me the mere accident which threw her on my charity for a safe conveyance home. I had already Fanny, Julia, and little Fanny, as we called my young niece, to carry home, and only a chariot. What was to be done? The rain fell in torrents. It was on a Tuesday night, and there was nobody in the round room that anybody knew, as that fool of a Brummell used to say, except Colonel Berkeley, who joined us immediately.

"In spite of the most prolific account I had heard of the gay Colonel, I considered my friend old enough to take care of

herself; and, as to sending her three miles, in such a costume, at such an hour, and in such weather, the thing was out of the question: so I told Berkeley that I must intrude on his politeness to set my friend down. 'To oblige you, with great pleasure,' was his prompt reply, before he had even looked in the face of the young French woman, to whom I presented him, when he assured her his coachman waited for her commands.

"The next morning, I made it a point to call and inquire after madame's health. She thanked me for having procured her so polite an acquaintance. 'I hope he was polite,' said I, 'for to tell you the truth, I very unwillingly placed you under his protection.' 'Why?' asked my friend. 'To be frank with you,' I replied, 'Colonel Berkeley is said to be such a terrible fellow! that no woman can safely remain a single instant *tête-à-tête* with him, particularly in a carriage. I understand he attacks both old and young, virtuous and wicked, handsome and ugly, maid, wife and widow.'

" 'And sal I be de only exception?' asked the French woman, in real dismay.

" 'What then,' I inquired in astonishment, 'are you sorry he was not impudent to you?' 'I do not conceive what you have told me, impudence,' continued the French woman, '*nous prenons cela autrement, en France.* Di only impudence vat I sal never forgive, is dat Colonel Berkeley have presumed to make me de exception, and if I ever meet him in de street, *je lui cracherai au nez.*'

" 'Non pas! non pas!' rejoined I, 'you are too pretty to have been an exception. It is a mere false character they have given the Colonel, or may be he set it about himself. For my part, I will take the first opportunity of getting into his carriage, in order to convince you of another exception, that you may hold up your head with the best of us.' This night has already proved I was right."

"Oh, Lord, what a falling off is here!" said Deerhurst to Berkeley.

"I had no desire for your French woman," replied the

Colonel, "and, as for you, if you would not fall in love with me some time ago, when I was your very humble servant, what chance had I after you had seen me making love to Sophia? Besides, my poor brother Augustus is going mad for you, Harriette, and, *àpropos* of him, you really treat him very ill."

"I mean to have that young gentleman confined to a mad-house," said I, "if he conducts himself in such a strange way again as he did last Saturday; throwing himself on his knees in my box, and acting his Cheltenham-tragedies at the opera."

"He is very handsome," Deerhurst observed.

"A mere ruffian!" I retorted.

"Do not be so severe on poor Augustus," said Colonel Berkeley, who was always the most affectionate brother I ever met with in my life. "He is a sailor, you know, and, upon my honour, he is very fond of you. I want you and Sophia to favour me with your company to dine at Richmond on Monday, and, if you will trust yourself to my care, I will drive my barouche."

"Willingly," answered I.

"But this is not all," continued the Colonel. "I am commissioned to intercede for Augustus."

"I am off then," said I, "for your brother is much too rude for my present state of health, and would, I know, tease me into a fever."

"Upon my word," said Berkeley, "I can make him do just what I please, and I have only interceded for him, after receiving his promise not to say or do anything that can possibly offend."

The engagement was concluded for Monday, and Deerhurst begged to be of our party.

"No more of your rural fighting parties for me," I hastily observed, "and I neither like eggs and bacon, nor pot-houses to eat my dinner in."

"No!" said Berkeley, laughing heartily, "did he really give you eggs and bacon for dinner?"

"And in the dog-days too!" continued I.

We then took our leave, and Colonel Berkeley set me down at my own door, in perfect safety.

The next day, I dined with Julia; Fanny was of the party. Julia was raving about Sir Henry Mildmay, by whom she professed to be pregnant. The shy Julia glorified in this *faux pas*.

"What mortal could have resisted such an angel!" exclaimed Julia.

"And Cotton?" added I.

"By your advice," replied Julia, "I have refused to receive him but as a friend."

"Certainly," said I; "I do think it wicked to put ourselves in the way of increasing a large family of children, only to starve them. You are the mother of six already, which is five more than your slender fortune can support."

"I shall have seven thousand a year at the death of my brother, who is in a decline," said Julia, whose eyes were very red, as though she had been weeping.

To my inquiry, what was the matter? Fanny answered, that the foolish creature had done nothing but shed tears from morning till night.

"If I could only once more have Mildmay in my arms," said Julia, "I should have lived long enough."

"And who is to protect Mildmay's child?" I asked.

"I would rather die than apply to him for money," answered Julia; "but my poor child will never see the light," and she burst into tears, "unless I see its beautiful father once more."

"Will once do?" I asked.

"I would be patient and resigned if I could kiss his heavenly eyes once more."

"*Et puis?*" said Fanny.

"*Sans doute! ça va sans dire*," added Julia.

"*Pas toujours*," I remarked, "however," giving my hand to Julia, "there is my hand on it, it shall be done, ma'am, and before this week is out, we pledge to you our royal word!"

Strange to say, this promise satisfied Julia, who immediately dried up her tears.

After dinner a young member of Parliament, of immense fortune, brought his carriage for Fanny. He was a Hampshire gentleman, of the name of Napier, who had been lately very attentive to her; but Fanny did not like him. He was a long-backed youth with very fine eyes, and that was all; a sort of home-bred young man, not ungentlemanlike, but wanting tact and spirit.

Soon after his arrival, Fanny took me out of the room, and asked me how I liked him?

"Oh! not in the least," I answered.

"I wish," said Fanny, "he would attach himself to poor Julia: her children, and her debts, and her natural turn for extravagance, will send her to a prison, unless a rich man like this would take her under his protection. Now, as I am determined not to have him myself, I have left them together, that he may draw her into conversation, and find out the truth of her being one of the most elegant women in England."

"You are very good," said I, laughing.

"What else can be done?" Fanny asked. "If Julia goes to prison, she will immediately destroy herself; and how easily this Napier, who has more than twenty thousand a year, could assist her, and pay off all her debts, seeing that he lives on three thousand, and possesses, in hard cash and at his banker's, more than a hundred thousand pounds."

"Oh! the vile, stingy monster!" said I, "where did he spring from?"

"From Oxford College," answered Fanny; "but his estates are in Ireland."

When we returned to the drawing-room, Napier did seem to have fallen in love with her conversation. However, he soon placed himself by Fanny's side, to make as much love as usual. "This is very poor sort of amusement for me, ladies," said I, "so I shall wish you all a very good night."

Fanny declared that she would accompany me.

Napier called her a coquette, and a false deceiver, reminding her of her promise to allow him to see her home.

"Cannot help it," answered Fanny, kissing her hand to him, and hurrying downstairs.

Napier offered me his arm to follow, and Julia held up her finger, significantly, to me, saying, "Remember".

"*Oui, oui,*" was my reply, and after Napier had handed us into my carriage, we requested him to return and chat with Julia. "A niece of Lord Carysfort," added I, "daughter to a maid of honour, the Honourable Mrs. Storer, and the most graceful creature breathing."

"Why," said Fanny, bursting out into a loud laugh, "Harriette, that madman with his placard and his challenge to all the world, about Bayley's blacking, in Piccadilly, is a fool to you."

"Never mind," I answered, "so that we can but get her off, and save her from a prison."

Before the carriage drove from the door, we had the satisfaction of seeing Napier return to Julia——*et puis*——*et puis*——but I will tell what happened some other time.

On our way home, Fanny told me how irregularly her allowance from the late Mr. Woodcock was paid, and that her boy George's schoolmaster had been dunning her for money due to him, which she could not pay.

"How good you are, then," said I, "to make over your rich conquest to Julia."

"There is no goodness in that," answered Fanny, whose heart was so very warm that she was always afraid of incurring ridicule from the extreme of a good thing; "for if Julia had never been born, I am sure I could not have endured that long-backed, amorous-looking Napier; besides, everyone must pity poor Julia, deserted as she is!"

"But then this stupid Mildmay, whose character was so well known to her! what had she to expect from him, who has never in his life been suspected of constancy for a single week?"

"And yet," said Fanny, "I really, myself, believed he loved Julia. You have no idea how attentive he has been to her, during your last illness, from which, thank God, you are

happily recovering," added Fanny. "I have not seen you look so like yourself for the last twelve months."

"I am better," answered I, "and yet, life is dull without affection, and all my bright illusions are destroyed for ever; but I have most pleasure now, when I can make myself a little useful; so you must let me take George off your hands. I am richer than you are; I will, therefore, pay his schoolmaster, and you must send him to me to-morrow. When his holidays are expired, I will, myself, take him back to school." Fanny said I was very good, and I answered, fiddlestick! as I set her down at her own house.

My mind was now a complete blank. My imagination was exhausted, my castle had fallen to the ground, and I never expected to rebuild it, for even my cool judgment told me that Ponsonbys were not often to be met with.

I had no fancy for going downhill, so I bought a great many books, and determined to make them my object. I lived very retired, and when I did go out, or admit company, it was more because I was teased into it, than from any pleasure I found in society.

Little George Woodcock came to me the next morning, and, before the week was out, he had broke open my jewel-box, stolen my money, kissed my housemaid, and half killed my footman. I looked forward, with much anxiety, to the period for taking him back to school. His schoolmaster was an old Frenchman, who lived at Layton-stone. Julia's three sons, and my nephew, had boarded with him four years.

"Mastaire Johnstones know very well," said the old Frenchman, when, at the beginning of the holidays, he had called on Fanny to make his compliments of her son and heir, "de young Mastaire Johnstones know very well, dat I always tell de boys dat dey must larne; but for Mastaire Woodcock, it is di boy of my school! ! Some time I loose him for six, seven hours, and at last I find him at de tip-top of von apple tree! Den as for boxing, he is box! box! two, tree, six time in a day. I believe very soon he will box me!"

Fanny promised to give him good advice, and the old French school-master took his leave, after declaring that if young Woodcock continued to be de boy of his school, for the next quarter, he must be under the necessity to turn him out of it.

Luttrell called on me the following day, and was greatly amused with the engagement, which I told him I had entered into with Julia. He informed me that Fred Lamb was arrived from the court of somewhere, I think Sicily, and had expressed a very strong desire to be allowed to visit me.

"Tell him," said I, "that I am worn out and tired of the world, and good for nothing."

Luttrell being our father-confessor general, to whom we all related everything, I asked him if he knew how Napier's *tête-à-tête* with Julia went off.

"Oh, I have just left the enemy," answered Luttrell, alluding to Amy, "who told me that Napier had made a violent attack on the virtue of Lord Carysfort's niece, in consequence of my flourishing panegyric, which had only served to prove her adamant to all but Sir Henry Mildmay."

"*Apropos* of that gay baronet," said I, opening my writing-desk, "such virtue as you describe, in this fair daughter of a maid of honour, must not go unrewarded; and I wrote a polite note to Mildmay, desiring him to call upon me in the evening."

Soon after Luttrell had taken his leave, old Smith, the haberdasher, was announced, with more returned bills.

Angels defend us! said I, what am I to say to him this time? I looked in the glass, settled my head-dress as becomingly as possible, and trusted to my charms and soft speeches for subduing his anger, as usual.

As I entered, I caught a full view of my friend Smith, in the glass; he was pacing the room with sturdy firmness, as though preparing himself for a desperate attack. His brow was knit, and, in his hand, he held the fatal black pocket-book, which I had no doubt contained my bills, six or seven times returned on his hands. *Avec tout mon savoir faire, je craignais de ratter le procureur*, as Laura says in Gil Blas; I therefore returned to

my bedroom, unseen, and desired my faithful housekeeper, Mrs. Kennedy, to declare that her mistress had been seized with a fit, on her way downstairs, and that, during the last attack of this sort, with which she had been afflicted, she had actually bitten her nurse's thumb clean off.

"Will you like to step up, and see her?" added Kennedy.

"No, no, I thank you," answered Smith, putting on a pair of his thickest beaver gloves, as though to defend his thumbs. "Some other time, if you please. My compliments"; and he was hurrying away.

"You will oblige me by stepping upstairs," said Kennedy, "as I really am frightened out of my wits; and Miss Wilson requires at least three persons to hold her when in these fits, and our William is just gone out with a letter to Sir Henry Mildmay's."

"Very sorry to hear it," replied Smith, running downstairs. "I regret that I have such a particular engagement that I cannot stay another instant," and he immediately gained the street door, which he took care to fasten safely, as soon as he was on what he now conceived the right side of it.

In the evening, Mildmay arrived at the hour I appointed, believing, no doubt, that the poor tender soul, Harriette Wilson, would not survive his neglect. He was proceeding, in a very summary way, to practical love-making.

"*Attendez un instant, mon ange!*" said I. "I am Julia's friend; besides, I have no opinion of you."

"In what way?"

"In the way you wish to shine! I believe you to be cold, and I hate cold men."

"Try me," answered Mildmay.

"*Je ne demande pas mieux.* Give me the proof I am going to ask, of your real genuine ardour, and I shall hereafter look up to you as something superior to the rest of mankind."

"Explain!" said Sir Henry.

"Well, then, there is Julia, of whom I know, you are completely tired. Only enable her to praise you to me to-morrow

evening, and I think I shall not be able to resist you."

"Will you promise?" Mildmay asked.

"What is the use of a promise, to such a beautiful creature as you, who know yourself to be irresistible?"

Mildmay looked pleased. I made him sing to me, and I must really have been very deficient in good taste, if I had not expressed my admiration of the sweetness of his voice and expression. When I had completely flattered and praised him into excellent temper, I made him promise to visit Julia, by two the next day.

"Shall I find you there?" Mildmay inquired, "and will you give me a kiss? otherwise, upon my honour, with the best possible intention to distinguish myself, I am afraid."

"Perhaps," said I, "you may find me with her; but, at all events, recollect that you did like poor Julia, and that I never, to the day of my death, will forgive you or speak to you, if you do not fulfil your promise to-morrow morning."

"You treat me very ill," said Mildmay, "and yet, I suppose, you must be obliged. Only mind, you must promise me there shall not be a scene between Julia and me. I cannot stand scenes, remember!"

"I was in hopes there would be act the fourth," retorted I; "but seriously, what do you understand by a scene?"

"Reproaches and hysterics, and all that sort of thing," answered Mildmay. "Do tell Julia it will be of no use but to spoil the moment, there is a dear creature."

"Poor Julia!" I retorted. "Only recollect her situation, and pray, if you ever wish me to admire or like you, do not be so very unfeeling."

"Yes, I have heard all, and a pretty piece of business it is altogether," said Mildmay, evidently much annoyed by it.

I refused to part with him till he had most faithfully promised, punctually at two the next morning. As soon as he was gone I dispatched the following note:

DEAR JULIA,

Sir H. Mildmay has this morning, given me his word and

honour, on pain of my everlasting displeasure, that he will attend your moderate commands, to-morrow, exactly at two o'clock, on condition that you do not give him a scene. Make my excuses to him for not joining you both. I dislike to be second fiddle, of all things. God bless you.

The next day, the one fixed on by Colonel Berkeley for our trip to Richmond, Sophia and the Colonel called for me at twelve o'clock, accompanied by that young savage, Augustus Berkeley, who appeared to be perfectly well-behaved in the presence of his brother, quite mild and humbled.

Sophia said it was a charming day.

"The atmosphere," I observed, "is heavy I think, and unhealthy."

"Oh, quite shocking," Sophia immediately replied, "I am absolutely ill with it already."

We drove down to Richmond as fast as four highbred horses could carry us, and Colonel Berkeley having ordered a dinner, as much too ostentatiously extravagant as Deerhurst's rural fête had been too scanty, proposed our rowing down the river for half an hour, while it was getting ready.

Augustus, at the word of command, took off his coat and waistcoat, and began rowing, while Berkeley was all attention to us.

"How delicious this is," said the Colonel.

"I never saw anything so beautiful," echoed Sophia.

I remarked that I was a little giddy.

"So am I," said Sophia, "very giddy indeed."

In less than an hour, I mentioned that the air of the river had given me an appetite, and Sophia, of course, had never been so hungry in all her life!

Colonel Berkeley, on landing, astonished the two boatmen by throwing them a five-pound note! The innkeeper entertained us in his best and most magnificent style. We conversed a great deal, for Colonel Berkeley can talk, which is not always the case, nor considered at all a necessary accomplishment in gentlemen of the present day. There are, in fact, various kinds

of gentlemen. A man is a gentleman, according to Berkeley Craven's definition of the word, who has no visible means of gaining his livelihood; others have called Lord Deerhurst and Lord Barrymore, and Lord Stair, gentlemen; because they are Lords: and the system, at White's Club, the members of which are all choice gentlemen, of course, is, and ever has been, never to blackball any man, who ties a good knot in his handkerchief, keeps his hands out of his breeches-pockets, and says nothing. For my part, I confess I like a man who can talk, and contribute to the amusement of whatever society he may be placed in; and that is the reason I am always glad to find myself in the company of Lord Hertford, notwithstanding he is so often blackballed at White's.

Colonel Berkeley and I conversed on many subjects; but there was one which was a favourite with us both—plays. Berkeley was mad for acting Shakespeare's plays, I for reading them. We were both lost in wonder as to how the poet, or any one man breathing, could have acquired such a perfect knowledge of human nature, in every class of society, in every gradation, from kings downwards. I, however, pointed out one exception, remarking that I did not conceive, from the little I had seen or heard of Jews, that Shylock was at all a natural character, or accurately drawn. "I never in my life," I continued, "remember having heard of a Jew being hanged for murder! The Mosaic laws are less pure than ours; but they are more strictly followed. The most malicious Jew dares not shed blood, his strong fear of God prevents it; and that fear is religion. In short, such, I have heard, is the superstitious fear a Jew entertains of shedding blood, that even if he had made his mind up to take the life of a Christian, it would yet be accomplished without a drop of blood being spilt. I cannot, with my very confined knowledge of these things, venture to say that Jews have not been occasionally executed for murder; but I can almost venture to assert that bloodshedding is far from the characteristic vice of a Jew; and, therefore, is Shylock unnaturally drawn."

"Recollect," returned Colonel Berkeley, "that Shylock is a Venetian Jew."

I went on: "and shall we attribute to these poor wanderers the peculiar crimes of every nation which may happen to give them birth, adding these to all the characteristic vices of their tribe? If the mere climate made a Venetian of Shylock, why does Shakespeare point at him as an usurer? If climate and example have no effect to make the Hebrew waver in his faith, is it charitable to suppose them more potent, in tending to deaden the fear and horror of bloodshed, in the mind of a poor Jew?"

"Bravo!" said Colonel Berkeley, "very ingeniously argued. There's a cunning Israelite at the bottom of all this, who has won your heart."

Sophia, for once in her life, ventured to be of a different opinion from her company, remarking that she was sure her sister Harriette could not love any of those nasty men, with long dirty beards, and dirty old clothes on their backs.

"I thank heaven," said I, "that I love no man; Jew, Christian or Turk."

"Why defend those nasty fellows then?" asked Augustus.

"Did you ever know any good of one of them?" said the Colonel.

"A Jew named Town," answered I, "a painter, who keeps a shop in Bond Street, went down to Newcastle about five years ago, to sketch views in that county. One morning he observed a lad driving his cattle along a field, and whose countenance particularly struck him. His was a true Roman head. The boy was about twelve years of age. The Jew called to him and asked him if he would stand still while he took his picture. The youth consented with much good nature; but, after having stood stock still for a quarter of an hour, he declared that he could not bear it any longer. Mr. Town asked him many questions, and being much surprised with the boy's sensible replies, inquired if he would like to go up to London with him? The lad hesitated.

"'You will not trust yourself with me then?' said the Jew. 'I would go anywhere with you, Sir; but my poor father and mother are so old.' The Jew requested to be made known to them, and was conducted to a wretched hovel, where the ancient pair resided. They immediately consented to place their child under the Jew protector, and, the next morning, the Israelite and his young protegée were on their road to London. On their arrival the Jew clothed the boy handsomely, and instructed him in the first rudiments of his art. Before the child had received a dozen lessons, Mr. Town foretold that he would excel as a painter; he therefore bound him apprentice for seven years, to himself, and stipulated to allow him ten shillings a week pocket money for the first two years, and then to go on doubling that sum every second year, to the end of his apprenticeship. The progress the youth made astonished the Jew. The child excelled most particularly in landscape-painting. Bred in the country, he had attentively observed the effect of lightning on trees and cattle. His gratitude to his kind benefactor knew no bounds, and his industry was indefatigable. Mr. Town, fearing lest, from inexperience, the poor lad might be led astray, or fall into bad company, instead of sending him to school, engaged masters in the house, to instruct him in reading and writing. His progress in these was almost equal to that he had made in drawing. He became the delight and comfort of Mr. Town's aged father, on whom he was never tired of attending; he would read to him, for hours together, and be grateful for the task.

"One day the Jew sent his protegée into the country, to take a sketch of some willow trees, and was surprised to see him return in tears. 'What is the matter, my poor fellow?' said the Jew. 'That brook, near which I have been sitting to sketch these trees, Sir, reminded me so much of one near my poor mother's hut,' answered the lad. 'You shall go down to Newcastle, and pay a visit to your parents,' said the benevolent Jew, 'and it shall not cost you one shilling, so prepare yourself to depart, by the coach, next week.' The boy shed tears of gratitude.

"On the day previous to his departure for Newcastle, he said he wished to ask a favour of his kind master's only sister; but feared it might be deemed impertinent. Being encouraged to proceed: 'Why, Sir,' said the lad, 'your great goodness has left me nothing to desire, since the first instant I entered your house; therefore, out of the allowance of pocket-money you have made me, I have saved up eleven pounds, which I hope your sister will condescend to lay out for me, in blankets and various other articles of comfort, which I am desirous of carrying down to my poor old parents.' The Jew gladly promised to prevail on his sister to do whatever he wished, and moreover assured the affectionate lad, that he should be allowed to make a yearly visit to his parents, as long as they lived, and always at his expense. 'Tell your parents that, though a Jew myself, I have not presumed to interfere with your former mode of worship; but, on the contrary, have made you regularly attend the service of the Church of England, ever since you left them.' "

Sophia was very much pleased with the story of the Newcastle shepherd-boy, and declared she would go and see him.

Augustus thought he would play Romeo delightfully; but the Colonel said the part of Douglas would suit him best.

I, by this time, conceived I had talked quite enough for one evening. I therefore endeavoured, with all my might, to call Sophia out, and draw her into some kind of conversation.

Berkeley was beginning to think himself trifled with, and, being naturally a little abrupt in such cases, he told her flatly that, if she meant to refuse him after all, she ought not to have admitted him so often.

Sophia continued to hint, with proper delicacy and due modest blushes, that her living with him or not, must depend on what his intentions were: in other words, she gently intimated that, as yet, she was ignorant what settlement he meant to make on her. The gay handsome Colonel Berkeley's vanity being now so deeply wounded, he in his sudden rage, entirely lost sight of what was due to the soft sex, at least to that part of it which had been so hard upon him.

"Do you fancy me then so humble and so void of taste, as to buy with my money the reluctant embraces of any woman breathing? Do you think I cannot find friends who have proved their affection, by the sacrifices they have made for me, that I should give my money to buy the cold-blooded being who calculates, at fifteen years of age, what the prostitution of her person ought to sell for?.'

Sophia was frightened, and shed tears.

"Colonel Berkeley," said I, "we are your visitors, and wish to retire immediately from such unmanly insult as you have offered to us. Will you procure us some safe conveyance? no matter what."

Colonel Berkeley immediately begged pardon, with much apparent humility, saying, "I am a passionate, ill-tempered, spoiled fellow, and must throw myself on your charity; or, if you prefer it, my carriage is at the service of you both, and neither I nor my brother shall intrude, without your permission."

I shook hands with him, as did Sophia, and little more was said. We all returned home together, but in silence, and Colonel Berkeley never afterwards sought Sophia's society.

The next day I had the satisfaction of driving down to Layton-stone, with my young torment of a nephew, and I left him under the protection of his schoolmaster, Mr. Codroie.

"Ah! Ah!" said the Frenchman, "here is de boy of my school again."

I assured George, in his presence, that if I heard any complaints, or if he was turned out of his school, I would use my interest to get him immediately sent to sea; but promised to give him every possible encouragement, if I received a good account of him.

I got home about five o'clock, and found Fred Lamb in my little library, looking over my books. I felt annoyed by this intrusion; but Frederick appeared to take so strong an interest in all I had been reading, and doing, since we last met, that my heart failed me, after I tried to quarrel with him.

"I never saw a girl, except yourself," said Frederick, "posses-

sing unbounded liberty from the age of fourteen, without a single friend, or anything better to guide her than her own romantic imagination, who yet contrives to grow wiser every year, to reflect, to read, and to improve her mind, in the midst of such flattery as you are surrounded by."

Fred Lamb did actually say all this; but I do not tell my reader that I was vain enough to believe above half of it; for, though I had bought my books to be ready, in case a fit of reading should happen to come over me, yet I must confess that, hitherto, I have not had a call, as Lord Headfort said.

Apropos, to what?

I'll tell you——

At Brighton, I used to make a general postman of the good Marquis of Headfort, who had long been our family's friend, equally at hand to congratulate us on our marriages, our simple fornications, our birth-days, or our expected deaths. Send all your letters to me at Brighton, under cover to Headfort, I used to say to everybody who could not frank, or were so cut off from the blessings of this life as not to have a member belonging to them. Headfort, having a packet of letters to bring up to me, every morning, from the Pavilion, to Prospect House! which was the dignified appellation my landlord bestowed on my humble cottage at Brighton, I requested he would rap twice only; according to the etiquette observed by other postmen.

"How much?" one day asked my stupid new servant, for which I discharged her on the spot, for how could one live with an animal so little alive to the sublime and beautiful! as to have mistaken the Marquis of Headfort, wrapped up in an old great coat, on a rainy day, for a common general postman!! I was really very much shocked indeed.

"Come up stairs, my dear marquis," said I, "and see me discharge this fool directly.

"Take off your great coat.

"Ah! *vous voilà*, *Marquis*, *de haut en bas*. *Dites donc*, *mon cher*, *en parlant du bas*, who do you make love to now? for it cannot be supposed a gay deceiver like yourself can be satisfied

with old Mrs. Massey all your life, although that crim. con. affair of yours did cost you so much money."

"Oh, my dear child," answered poor Headfort, "it is more than ten years since Mrs. Massey has cut me dead, as her lover."

"Why?" I asked.

"Don't you know, my dear, that she has turned methodist, and thinks it wicked."

"But then," said I, "it is still lucky for you that her conscience permits her to make use of your house, purse, equipage and private boxes!"

"Yes," said Headfort, "she still does me that honour; for which I pay very dear, particularly on a Sunday, when she reads me Letters from the Dead to the Living, till I am almost tempted to wish her own name at the bottom of them."

"With whom, pray, do you console yourself?"

"I have not had a call, my dear, for the last five years!"

"It will come on you when you shall be born again, by the assistance of Mrs. Massey's prayers," I remarked.

I am, however, wandering from my subject.—

No matter, it was a very bad one!

It was Fred Lamb, who dined with me, read to me, talked of love to me, and looked all passion, just like the satyr of my vision.

What vision, pray? the reader asks; that is to say, if ever I should be honoured with a reader, which is not at all certain. I am ready prepared and armed for abuse of every sort and kind: but not to be read! ! No matter! if this happens, it will be entirely Stockdale's fault, for not enlivening the work with pretty pictures, as I have suggested to him, and certainly cannot, by the most remote possibility, be owing to any demerit of mine!

Above all, I wanted Wellington to be exhibited, dripping with wet, standing opposite my street door at midnight, bawling up to Argyle, who should be representing my old Abigail, from my bedroom window. Good gracious! I quite forgot to tell this adventure! ! How could I be so ridiculous and negligent?

Never mind, you shall have it now—But there is poor Fred Lamb waiting all this time, in my select library! I can't help it—There's no getting on with Fred Lamb. I never could use him, to any purpose, in all my life; and yet there's matter enough in him too! What matters that? Let it stand over, or let it pass. Fred Lamb can read Zimmerman, which he will find among my books. It will teach him to love solitude and to profit by it, while my readers amuse themselves with the interesting adventure, which happened on the very night of Wellington's arrival from Spain, and which I beg a thousand pardons for not having made them acquainted with, in due order and proper time.

Good news! ! Glorious news! Who calls? said Master Puff, the newsman.—Not that anybody called the least in the world; but Wellington was really said to have won a mighty battle, and was hourly expected. Cannons were fired, and much tallow consumed in illumination. His grace of Argyle came to me earlier than usual on that memorable evening; but, being unwell and love-sick, he found me in my bed-chamber, when, catching me in his arms, he swore, by his brown whiskers, that this night, at least, he would be a match for mighty Wellington.

"*Quelle bizarre idée vous passe par la tête?*" said I. "Surely you have forgotten the amiable duchess, his bride, and all the fatigue his grace has encountered, enough to damp the ardour of any mighty hero or plenipotentiary, for one evening, at any rate; therefore, trust me, Wellington will not disturb us to-night."

At this very moment, a thundering rap at the door was heard.

"*Vive l'amour! Vive la guerre,*" said Argyle: "*Le voila!*" And hastily throwing my dressing gown over his shoulders, and putting on one of my old nightcaps, having previously desired "the most particlerst man as is," not to let anybody in, hastily put his head out of my bed-room window, which was on the second floor, and soon recognised the noble chieftain, Wellington! Endeavouring to imitate the voice of an old duenna, Argyle begged to know who was at the door?

"Come down, I say," roared this modern Blue Beard, "and don't keep me here in the rain, you old blockhead."

"Sir," answered Argyle, in a shrill voice, "you must please to call out your name, or I don't dare to come down, robberies are so frequent in London just at this season, and all the sojers, you see, coming home from Spain, that it's quite alarming to poor lone women."

Wellington took off his hat, and held up, towards the lamp, a visage which late fatigue and present vexation, had rendered no bad representation of that of the knight of the woeful figure. While the rain was trickling down his nose, his voice, trembling with rage and impatience, cried out, "You old idiot, do you know me now?"

"Lord, sir," answered Argyle, anxious to prolong this ridiculous scene, "I can't give no guess; and, do you know, sir, the thieves have stolen a new water-butt out of our airy, not a week since, and my missis is more timbersome than ever!"

"The devil!" vociferated Wellington, who could endure no more, and, muttering bitter imprecations between his closed teeth, against all the duennas and old women that had ever existed, returned home to his neglected wife and family duties.

That's all! !

CHAPTER VIII

And now we really must attend to the Right Honourable Frederick Lamb, plenipotentiary at the court of ——, with all its appendages and powers to have and to hold by, &c., &c., &c.

He was, then, very handsome, and clever, and as his passions were most ardent, he would grind his teeth in bitterness of wounded pride, if you did not happen to be affected with the same ardour. Now I hate a man of this complexion. I take these sort of things, when they happen to me, very differently. My love or passion for a man is at once destroyed, turned to burlesque ridicule, *le moment qu'on ne me rend pas la pareille*. I remember dismissing a hero of this sort, in the words of *Monsieur l'archevêque de Grenade, de Gil Blas*. After assuring him of my friendship, *je vous souhaite toute sorte de prosperité, mon ami, avec un peu plus de gout*.

There is Luttrell, who, as everybody knows, is the ugliest man alive, and he looks so solemn too withal; and yet, would you believe it? that witty fright, in all our long intimacy, had the impudence never once to put the question to me!

One day I made believe to be in a passion about it, and assured him he ought to be ashamed of himself.

"You refuse very unexceptionable people," answered Luttrell, with his usual methodistical earnestness of expression; "you refuse Fred Lamb! and why may not I refuse you? You do not excite me."

"I'll go to the Albany some night, in order to lay violent hands on you," I replied.

"I live at B3," answered Luttrell, taking his hand out of his coat-pocket, to place it deliberately in his breast, as he raised

his head, with that sort of determined air and attitude, which said, as plainly as attitude could speak it, do your worst!

But, again, I am digressing from Fred Lamb!! What is to be done? unless he turn freemason, and tie me to his apron strings! I wish I had let him alone, instead of handing him into my library; he is quite a weight on my mind! Perhaps the reader will allow me to cut the subject where it stands? But I should like to tell them about the Cock at Sutton, too.

Of course, you all know The Cock at Sutton? or, lest any lady or gentleman should be so deficient in tact, so behind-hand in topographical knowledge, so unacquainted with public characters, suppose I just mention that the celebrated athletic Jackson, the gentleman-bruiser and prize-fighter, once shouldered and insinuated himself into the good graces of the fair widow who kept The Cock at Sutton, which afterwards became his, for several years, by right of marriage and rights of a landlord: hence its celebrity.

However, the story I have to relate has nothing to do with Jackson, else I could about it straight; but there is a fatality attending on Fred Lamb, and, though I am bored to death with him, I don't like to miss telling you the story of The Cock at Sutton! and so here goes,—to use mad Dr. Roberton's elegant expression.

I could only get Fred Lamb out of my library, by promising him that we certainly should meet once more, if only to sign and seal my forgiveness of his former violence.

"Well, then," said Frederic at last, "I shall come up from Brocket-hall the day after to-morrow, and I will call on you on my way to town, and if you do not desire and wish to see me, order your servant not to let me in; for I should be very sorry to be accused of forcing your inclinations a second time."

The next day, being, of course, deeply affected with Fred Lamb's absence, I went to call on Julia, *pour me distraire*.

But where is your story of The Cock at Sutton? the reader inquires.

I am coming to that, by-and-bye.

Julia's spirits appeared much improved since my last visit to her. "I see very well, by your altered look," said I, "that Sir H. Mildmay has been paying you a visit, and has fulfilled England's expectation, by having done his duty."

"True," answered Julia, with a deep sigh, which almost resembled a groan; "but I see very plainly that he is tired of me."

"Oh the wretch!" said I. Did ever anybody hear of such a heartless deceiver! For my part, though I candidly confess that Mildmay is beautiful, I would not have him, or even desire to be his lawful wedded wife—was I Robinson Crusoe's better half, and left to shift, or unshift for myself on a desert island. I feel no more love towards Mildmay, than men of heart and sentiment usually entertain for common prostitutes; for who, among the worst of them, is more common than Mildmay?

The contrast between such a notorious gay Lothario, and the sly, voluptuous and most luxurious Lord Ponsonby, struck, at that moment, to my very heart, and I was almost beginning to adore him again with all my soul, and with all my strength. I humbled myself to the very dust, and he disregarded my prayers, said I to myself, my really fine eyes flashing indignant fire; as I caught the reflection of their beauty, in the opposite glass, I determined never to let the vile, provoking Lord Ponsonby occur to me again!

"I would resign all the rest of my life, without a sigh, to be loved for one single week more by that angel Mildmay," said Julia.

"My poor forlorn woman," I replied, "for God's sake recollect you are a mother! Whoever forgets that, is less than human. Think of your poor, dear, beautiful children. It is wrong, perhaps, to intrigue, under any circumstances, yet somebody who was wise, or who passed for wise, has said that there are exceptions to every rule. Mr. Napier is rich and free. I think that it depends on you to provide for your children. Consider, my dear Julia," I continued, taking her hand, and I saw a tear glisten in her eye.

"When do you expect Mr. Napier?" I asked.

"The long-backed,odious creature, will call here to-morrow," answered Julia.

"I wish something else could be done," said I, hastily, sympathising in her disgust.

"Shall I write to your uncle, Lord Carysfort?"

"Do not mention that unfeeling wretch!" exclaimed Julia. "A legacy has been left me, which I cannot help thinking has been unfairly appropriated."

"Have you applied to His Lordship on that subject?" I inquired.

"I have written to him twice," answered Julia, "and my second letter was answered by His Lordship, in these words:—*The person from whom you expected a legacy, showed a becoming horror and disgust at your vile profligate conduct, by withdrawing your name from his will.*"

"Rely on it," said I, "that honourable uncle of yours has taken due care of your property. But what can be expected from one thus destitute of every manly feeling of compassion, towards a poor, fallen, defenceless relative?"

Julia absolutely sobbed aloud. I never saw her thus affected; for she was not given to the melting mood. To change the conversation, I asked her what had become of another noble relative?

"He has paid nearly a thousand pounds for me, and declares he can do no more," replied Julia.

"No matter," said I, "Napier is your man. Since you could be unchaste to gratify your own passions, I am sure it cannot be wrong to secure the comfort and protection of six beautiful children."

"But Napier's vanity makes me sick," retorted Julia, impatiently. "The possession of my person would not satisfy him. He wants me to declare and prove that I love him; and the thing is physically impossible."

I thought of Fred Lamb, and was silent.

"What has become of Amy and Argyle?" I asked, after a pause.

"Amy," said Julia, "is very proud of Argyle, and also of her pregnancy, and lives in hopes that her unborn babe, by the Scottish laws, may yet be Duke of Argyle."

"She has bespoken a boy, then?"

"Of that too she lives in hopes," repeated Julia.

"And the Duke," inquired I, with something like a sickness of the heart, "is he as tender and as loving as ever?"

"I have heard nothing to the contrary," answered Julia.

I was not jealous, but disgusted. I had always wished to love my sisters dearly. It was very hard on me that they would not let me!

"If," said Julia, "I were to consent to Napier's wishes, and he did not provide for my children, I should go into the Serpentine river the very next instant."

"Here is a fuss about trifles," said I. "Why cannot we take these things as the French women do? *Ca lui fait tant de plaiser! pendant que ça me coute si peu!*

"That is the way they argue, and very philosophically too. Your sin has been bringing all these children into the world; and now, *coute qui'l coute*, you must provide for them to the extent of your power." I concluded here my very moral advice, and took my leave, promising to join her in our opera box on the morrow evening.

The next morning Mildmay called on me. He reproached me with having deceived and made a fool of him; but all he could say or do could not effect any change of my sentiments in his favour.

He had also professed to love Julia once, and how had he requited her? Heaven defend me from the like humiliation, thought I, and which I should richly deserve, were I to encourage this cold-hearted, profligate, beautiful Sir Henry.

As soon as I contrived to get rid of him, and had dined, I went to join Julia at the Opera-house. The first man who came into my box was Fred Lamb; he appeared delighted to see me.

"When did you come to town?" I asked.

"This morning," Fred answered, "and I called on you; but you were either out, or denied to me."

"I passed the morning in my little library," answered I.

"You have made me very wretched," whispered Fred Lamb, pressing my hand with much passionate agitation. He looked remarkably well.

"Indeed, Fred," said I, "I did not mean it."

"Remember your promise, then," added Fred Lamb, "and do, pray, dearest Harry, tell me, when you will throw away two whole days on me, in the country?"

"What shall we do there?"

"Get married," interposed Julia.

"Married!" exclaimed Fred Lamb. "From my heart and soul, I shall pity the man who ever hopes to attach you, Harriette, to himself. You have the knack of torturing those who love you, beyond the possibility of endurance! Why not have told me at once, that you did not mean to receive me?"

"I meant well," answered I, sighing; "for it never gave me any pleasure to be loved by those whose love I could not return."

"Had you been my wife, by heavens, I should have murdered you, long ago," said Fred Lamb, half seriously.

"Why, yes," I replied, "I think, as yet, you had better not venture on me: but really, Fred, on the day I turn fifty, I propose being steady, and then perhaps,——"

"No," said Fred Lamb, "not a bit of it. You would only then, as now, be one day grateful for attentions, and the next confess that you were sorry, advise one not to fret for a woman of fifty; but declare you had changed your mind."

"If this is really my character, and you imagine I should act thus, for ever, towards every man, how can you be so very weak as to like me?"

Lord Molyneux came into my box at this instant. I always made it a point to make violent love to Lord Molyneux, for the same reason that I used to say soft things to Luttrell; because they, neither of them, professed the least love to me.

"I wish all the young men would dress as you do," said I to His Lordship. "That dear little gentlemanlike bow, on the little, *vieille cour* three-cornered hat! How quiet and interesting, compared to the vile, gold-laced, dragoon-looking, flat thing Lord Uxbridge carries under his arm!"

"What you say is most highly flattering," said Lord Molyneux, with good-natured composure.

"And then, white silk stockings always win my heart, no matter who wears them. In short, your Lordship is better dressed, and better adapted, altogether, to set off a woman's opera-box, than Brummell, Lord Jersey, or any man I know; and if I could only have insured to myself the honour of a visit from you every night, I should not have put myself to the expense of ten pounds for these new red curtains."

Lord Molyneaux said that he was sure I ought to give him credit for the gentleness of his disposition, and the unheard-of patience with which he stood there to be quizzed and laughed at; "and yet," added Molyneux, "though this is invariably what happens to me, your box, altogether, has attractions one cannot resist."

"All nonsense," said I, "I am no longer to be put off in this manner. I, who am stark staring mad for you."

The Honourable Berkeley Craven now joined us.

"Your nephew, here, Mr. Craven, to whom I addressed myself, refuses to return my passion!"

"I, as your uncle, command you to satisfy the young lady on the spot," said Berkeley Craven.

"I am off," said Fred Lamb.

Julia, who greatly admired him, as well as the character I had given her of him, entreated him to remain.

"You have not settled your rural excursion with Harriette, yet," Julia told him.

"Oh, true! where is it to be?" I was obliged to ask; because Fred looked in such a passion with me.

"Would you like Richmond?" Fred inquired.

"Oh, no!" I answered. "Sophia and I dined there a short

time ago, and—variety, you know, my dear Fred Lamb, is everything, even at fifty years of age!"

"Go to The Cock, at Sutton," said Berkeley Craven. "It is a delightful, pretty, rural place for a man to read rhymes and be romantic in; just fit for you, Fred."

"Are you ever taken with either a fit of reading, or a fit of romance, Berkeley?"

"Ask my young nephew here, who can tell you how I used to sit, and sigh, and drink brandy and water, with Mrs. Patten, after the play," answered Berkeley Craven.

"So much for your romance!" said I.

"And as to reading," continued Berkeley, "I will be bound to say that, among men who have received no regular education, not one has read more plays and farces than I have; and I always read the newspaper from beginning to end, except the debates."

The Duc de Berri next came in; and we all stood up till he was seated, as bound by etiquette; and then followed my young, new acquaintance, the Duke of Leinster, who stood up by himself, like a noun substantive, for want of a chair.

Now the said Duke of Leinster being a very stingy, stupid blockhead, whom nobody knows, I will describe him. His person was pretty good; straight, stout, and middle-sized, with a good, fair, Irish allowance of leg. It was a good leg, however, *mais en gros*; and I never saw anything more decided in the shape of curls, than those which adorned and distinguished Leinster's crop from all such heads of hair as are in the habit of resisting the curling tongs, when they do not happen to be red hot: *c'étoit, enfin, une belle tête.*

I do not see how a man could be well handsomer, without a mind. His Grace was, at that time, in the constant habit of assenting to whatever anybody said, good or bad. He was all smiles and sweet good humour. He would in fact have made an excellent husband for Sophia; yet, strange to say, he felt not the slightest inclination towards her; but Leinster is not the first fool I have met with, who required wit and talent in a mistress.

"How did your Grace's party on the river, go off this morning?" I asked.

"Oh, it was charming," answered the Duke; with more of the brogue than was at all necessary for a lad who had been bred at Eton. "But, upon my honour," added Leinster, "the English are too stiff and abominable, for, just as I had stripped and began to row, they hallooed out 'Wait for His Grace! where's His Grace? where's the Duke of Leinster?'—as if His Grace, who happens to be a mere wild Irish boy, of nineteen, was not allowed to amuse himself in the same way that other lads do. I question if they did not expect to see me in a big wig," added Leinster.

Lord Molyneux waited to catch my eye and kiss his hand, as he made his exit.

"You are driving away the *vieille cour*, by expressing those vulgar ideas."

"I cannot help it," replied Leinster. "God Almighty has not cut me out for a fine gentleman."

"One word," said Fred Lamb, "and I am off to make room for better men."

"I really will," I interrupted him in a whisper, not knowing how else to get rid of him, "I really will drive down to The Cock at Sutton, to-morrow morning, at about twelve, and inquire for you."

Fred Lamb's eyes brightened. "Swear it, upon your honour and soul," said he, seizing my hand.

"I do swear," I rejoined.

He pressed his lips on the hand he held, in fervent gratitude, as he took his leave.

"I knew I should find my noble cousin, the big duke, here," said the young handsome Harry De Roos, peeping his Narcissus-like head into my box.

"Come in, you pretty Harry," said I.

"Oh! I am very melancholy," observed De Roos, blushing, as he took his seat.

"Upon my honour," said Leinster, "Henry is fretting for

nothing at all. Wait now, while I tell you all about it."

"Indeed, and we are waiting," I answered.

"Why," Leinster went on, "his mother, my Lady De Roos, is going to send him down to a private tutor, to-morrow, and I have frightened him with my description of the Smiths, that's all."

"Who are the Smiths?" I asked.

"Mr. Smith is the name of the big Duke's tutor, whom he has just left," answered De Roos, "after enduring such wretchedness, for more than two years, as would have about finished me, I am sure."

"Nothing at all like wretchedness, upon my honour," retorted Leinster. "It is all Harry's spoiled way."

"Tell us, you big Duke, how you used to pass your valuable time, at this said bug-bear of a tutor, Mr. Smith's," said I.

"Listen while I tell you then," replied Leinster. "Myself and two other lads were under his care. We rose at six, and cleaned our own boots and shoes."

De Roos looked on his peculiarly delicate white hand and fingers, and sighed heavily! !

"And then," proceeded Leinster, "we took our breakfast, which consisted of thick slices of bread, with a little salt butter. After that we had three large books placed before us, and in which we were desired to read for five hours, taking down notes of whatever struck us most forcibly. At dinner, which consisted one day of a roast joint, the next of the same hashed, the third, ditto, minced, our society was enlivened by the three Miss Smiths!"

"What sort of animals were they?" inquired Julia, laughing.

"The eldest, Miss Jemima, wore a sort of a false rump, sticking out so," and Leinster put himself into a most ludicrous attitude.

To my question, whether she was pretty? he answered that her face was a little too much like a dead horse for perfect beauty.

"Gorgons, all three of them, and the youngest turned of thirty," said De Roos, with a heavy groan.

"But then," interrupted Julia, "Mr. De Roos is not going to live with Mr. Smith."

"True," continued De Roos," and, surely, there cannot be another such a vile place in the world, take it all together, cleaning boots, and the Miss Smiths, and all?"

"No," I answered, "you must hope the best, and recollect that merely being minus the Miss Smiths is something."

"Thank God, I have done with private tutors!" said Leinster.

"How do you like Oxford?" asked Julia.

"Delighted with it," replied the Duke. "*Apropos* of Christchurch. Do you know that Brummell is cut amongst us, and who do you think sets the fashions there now?"

"Yourself," perhaps.

"No, nothing is asked, but whether Harriette Wilson approves of this or that? Harriette likes white waistcoats,—Harriette commends silk stockings, etc. I asked my friend, the young Marquis of Worcester, why he did not curl his straight locks? Harriette considers straight hair most gentlemanlike. On my asking him if he knew Harriette, the Marquis owned that he had never seen her, adding, "I ran up three times to the Opera, on purpose; but she did not make her appearance. Will you present me to her? I shall be much indebted to you." "Not I, indeed, upon my honour," was my answer, "and I am the only young man at Oxford, acquainted with you."

Young Lambton, the little curly-headed opposition man, second son of Lady Ann Windham, now interrupted us. The Duc De Berri, who had been all attention to Julia, arose to depart, and we all stood up to bow him out, with the self-same ceremony with which we bowed him in. As to Berkeley Craven, he had found his way out, unobserved by us, long before.

Lambton had been for the last three weeks, trying to muster courage to express his passion, and Leinster, observing his anxiety to say soft things in my ear, took his hat to depart, first declaring that he should hold himself in readiness, in the round room, to see me safe to my carriage. Harry De Roos, as he

followed his cousin, begged us to pity him, and convey his tender regards to Sophia.

Next came Napier, who, with his usual ill breeding, began to whisper in Julia's ear. However, I would have put up with more than that, to have been of use to her.

Lord Kinnaird paid me a sort of flying visit; but seeing Napier so deeply engaged on one side, and Lambton so tender on the other, he had the impudence to whisper in my ear, "*Mmelle. Harriette, il ne faut pas les corrompre*," and then left us.

His Lordship was overheard by Lambton, who began to fidget about, and redden, and appear very uneasy.

"What is the matter, Mr. Lambton?" asked Julia.

"I am not much of a Frenchman," muttered Lambton, "but I perfectly understood what Lord Kinnaird said, and I think it was extremely impertinent."

Lambton's particular friend, the Honourable Thomas Dundas, now joined us. I immediately related this mighty affair to him.

Lambton declared that, whatever his appearance might be, he had no idea of being treated like a child by any man, seeing that he was of age.

"Yes," interrupted I, "of age to be wiser than to take offence where, very evidently, no offence was meant. Lord Kinnaird only knows you by sight."

"The less reason for his taking such a liberty," answered the little man, with much impatient dignity.

While Dundas was endeavouring to calm his irritated friend, the curtain dropped, and the Duke of Leinster hurried upstairs to be in time to conduct me into the round room. Dundas and Lambton followed us, the latter still grumbling, and very sulky.

Lord Kinnaird passed us again, and nodded, good-naturedly, as he chaperoned some ladies to their carriage. Lambton spoke loudly at him, as he passed, saying, he did not consider himself a subject for ridicule, or in danger of being corrupted, or young enough to endure the accusation.

Lord Kinnaird heard nothing, as applied to himself, never having dreamed of such a thing as insulting or picking a quarrel with young Lambton. This both I and Mr. Dundas took pains to impress on his mind, but the peevish, fretful creature refused to hear reason.

Again His Lordship passed us, and again Lambton growled at him, with his eyes fixed on his own well-blacked shoes.

It was now my turn to lose my patience.

"Good heavens!" I exclaimed, "is this what you Opposition-gentlemen call spirit? growling at a man, between your teeth, for an imagined insult? Why growl, or be sulky, if nobody has offered you any insult? and, if they have, why do you not address them with firm, manly civility, to request an explanation or apology?"

Having thus brought my little spit-fire gentleman to a point, he soon contrived to pocket his supposed wrongs, since challenging had been hinted at by me as his alternative, and went home without touching on the subject to Lord Kinnaird.

I do not exactly know what these young Lambtons are good for except sulkiness. I remember hearing the officers of the old 10th Dragoons, to which regiment the eldest Lambton had formerly belonged, declare that he had contrived so to prejudice the whole regiment against him, that there was no rest for himself or his brother officers till he left it. I do not mean absolutely to assert by this, that there really is no good about either of the Lambtons, being in the first place an incompetent judge of their merits, from having only a slight acquaintance with the youngest; and, in the second, it being my intention to draw my characters with truth and nature, I should be very sorry to caricature them. I will tell you why: but this is a secret,—I do not like them well enough to tell you a single untruth to their prejudice, and thereby to shake your faith in such facts as else would tell against them. In common justice to my own heart, I must add that I yet like even my enemies, and those who have used me worst, too well, to desire that you should believe them worse than they really are.

What I have stated, and mean to state hereafter, I will abide by, and swear to; and let them deny, it if they can. I allude to all such facts, as might be likely to prejudice my reader against any individual. As to mere harmless conversations, I do not profess more than general accuracy; I often add a yes, a nod, or a no, or I neglect my dates and relate anecdotes together which happened at different periods; but happen they did; and no conversation is described herein, which did not take place, within my own knowledge, and, for the most part, in my own hearing.

In regard to the Lambtons, I have related all I ever heard or knew of them, good or bad; and, judging of the youngest, from my slight observation, never having conversed with him, for an hour together in my life, I should pronounce him well read; rather sensible; not one bit witty; touchy, sulky, proud, and overbearing: but, having yet the fear of God always before him, he prefers growling to duelling, as in duty bound. So much I guess; yet, being uncertain as to what relates to his religious principles, I beg that all his friends will consider him as bold as a lion, until he shall, himself, have proved to them the contrary.

To proceed, I refused to permit the Duke of Leinster to accompany me home, although he declared himself ready to mount the box, or to stand behind, with my dapper little footman! I was out of sorts, and out of spirits at the idea of having promised to meet Frederic Lamb at The Cock at Sutton on the following morning. Oh, this tiresome Fred Lamb! I wonder if any woman alive was ever in love with him, with the exception of the once celebrated Charlotte Windham; who would have taken him into keeping, at least so I have heard, and found him in washing, tea, sugar, and raw eggs, to the end of his natural life, had he not cut her dead, *pour mes propres beaux yeux*. Handsome! clever! young! a great plenipo, and the recorded son of the Earl of Melbourne! What would ladies be at? *On ne connoit pas toujours son pére, c'est un malheur; on est sur, cependant, d'en avoir eu un, cela console!* as says Pigault Le Brun.

Fred Lamb certainly had a father, and, in my conscience, I believe him to have been a man of high rank, no matter whether

he was a lord, a duke, or a prince, and what is more, his mother was a married woman; and yet, notwithstanding these multifarious advantages of both, I looked forward with disgust to the idea of meeting him, at The Cock, at Sutton. How could I be so deficient in good taste?

I found two letters on my dressing-table; the first I took up was in my young nephew's well-known round text. I knew that he would not write, unless he wanted money, or clothes, whips, or cricket-bats, and as I happened to be very poor, I did not venture to break the seal, till I had examined the other letter, in search of consolation. It was addressed in an unknown, and I fancied, disguised hand. I hastily broke open the plain wafer seal, and found a two hundred pound banknote, merely inclosed in a blank cover. Charming correspondent, said I, how eloquent is thy silence!

It is very clear, continued I to myself, that there is a providence which is kind enough to take particular care of me; for I have only to spend my last shilling, in order to ensure to myself a full purse, which comes to me nobody knows how. I was at a loss to guess at the munificent being who could find pleasure in thus secretly disposing of so large a sum without even the chance of being thanked for it. It must be Lord Ponsonby, thought I, and, strange to say, the idea gave me pain instead of pleasure. I would rather have been indebted to any man's goodness than his. It was a relief to my mind, to believe him heartless and unworthy of my affection.

To change the current of my thoughts, I opened my young nephew's letter, which also contained an inclosure, in the shape of a little, dirty note, directed to William Halliday, my footman. The letter to me was as follows:—

My Dear Aunt,

I hope you are well, as this leaves me at present. Excuse this bad writing, as I am so very bad, and my head aches fit to split; but I am ordered, this very moment, before the post goes out, to acquaint you with my accident, as Monsieur Codroie says,

perhaps, you may wish me to come to town, to have the rest of my teeth put to rights; the fact is, then, to be short, I was running just now, and I hit my face against another boy's head, and broke out my two front teeth.

Your affectionate nephew,
GEORGE WOODCOCK.

P.S. Pray deliver the enclosed to William, in answer to a long stupid sermon he has written to me, about five shillings he says I bor-rowed of him.

George's enclosure was, merely, poor William's laboured epistle, turned inside out, with these eloquent words written near the seal,—

Five and four makes nine,
Mind your business, and I'll mind mine.

Vive la poésie! said I, throwing the letter aside, and ringing for my *femme de chambre*, whom I desired to prepare for my journey to The Cock at Sutton, on the following morning.

I did not awake till twelve o'clock, when I rang my bell.

"*Madame, la voiture est à la porte*," said my French maid, as she entered my bedroom.

"I cannot help it; so bring me a cup of chocolate, *pour me donner du courage*," I replied.

Before I had finished it, the Duke of Leinster was announced, and I went down to him in my dressing-gown and slippers.

"Upon my honour," said His Grace, "I am very glad you do not keep your appointment with Fred Lamb. I have brought little George some strings to mend his fiddle with, and if you will give it me, I will string it for him."

I rang for the fiddle, and Leinster set to work in great glee.

"How did you get home last night?" I asked.

"Oh," said Leinster, "my brother, Fitzgerald, has found out such a woman! ! Upon my honour, I never laughed so much in all my life. He told me she was Venus herself, just emerged from the froth of the sea! I wanted to go home and think of you; but Fitzgerald dragged me by force to No. 2, Upper

Norton-street. We were shown into a parlour by an old dirty duenna, who assured us her mistress was engaged, and she regretted it of all things.

" 'Good gracious!' said I, 'Fitz, you are not going to wait?'

" 'Yes,' said my brother, mysteriously; 'she is in keeping, and has been these five years. I shall ruin her if, I am found here, so pray be quiet. The gentleman who keeps her is a captain of horse-marines.'

" 'For God's sake, let me be off,' said I, making the best of my way to the door. I can stand a lick or two, as well as most lads of my age and country; but, being in love elsewhere, and not quite come to my strength, I do not feel much inclined to encounter this horse-marine to-night.' However, Fitzgerald over-ruled all my objections, and kept me there, in perfect misery, for more than half an hour. At last, we heard the creaking of heavy boots descending the stairs. I scarcely ventured to breathe, expecting, every minute, to be called to account by the horse-marine, for being found concealed on his premises at past two o'clock in the morning.

"Upon my honour, I did not half like it! and only just fancy my horror when, instead of going out at the street-door, as we both expected, this much-dreaded horse-marine strutted into the parlour, in search of his hat! He did not look much like a horse-marine, but reminded me more of a city hosier. Nevertheless, I made myself as small as possible, and strove to hide behind the scanty, red, window-curtain. As to Fitzgerald, believing that all was lost, he became bold from desperation, and, folding his arms across his breast, he fixed his eyes steadily on his rival. The horse-marine, who had entered with the sort of strut which became a commander-in-chief of No. 2, Upper Norton-street, started back, instead of encountering my brother's fixed regard, and began to stammer out an apology. He had just taken the liberty of seeing the lady home safe, from the opera; he begged pardon if it had been wrong, he was sure no harm, nor disrespect was meant, etc.

"By this time, my brother, who, I assure you, is by no means

such a fool as I am, saw exactly how the case stood, and that the horse-marine was but the creature of his fair mistress's imagination, a sort of circular bug-bear, by which she contrived to frighten all her lovers, while she flattered their vanity with the idea that her acquaintance was an unusual *bonne fortune*, which their peculiar merits alone had obtained for them. This conviction being impressed on my brother's mind, he interrupted his rival, in the midst of his humble apologies, by playing himself for that night only, the character of the terrific horse-marine! ! And, waving his hand, with much pomp, towards the door, as he fixed his back against the fire-place, said, 'No offence, my good fellow, no offence! only there is the door, you know, and, unless you prefer making your exit by the window, never let me see your rascally ugly face in this house again!'

"Upon my honour," continued Leinster, "I could not stand it any longer, and before the poor trembling wretch got to the street-door, we both broke out into a roar of laughter, which was interrupted by the entrance of the frail fair one, herself, whom my brother immediately accosted thus:—

" 'Fair lady, since I have been allowed to make so very valuable an acquaintance as that of your horse-marine, my conscience will not permit me to interfere with his happiness'; and we hastened out of the house, before the lady could recover from her confusion and surprise."

"Now, Duke," said I, "there's the door," placing myself before the fire and pointing to it, in humble imitation of Fitzgerald.

Leinster took this gentle, delicate hint, with much good nature, and left me at about two o'clock. I felt really ashamed of myself, and, hurrying on my travelling dress, was soon with my maid, on our road to The Cock at Sutton. Fred Lamb was waiting at the door, and his joy, on perceiving my carriage, overcame all his late vexation.

"I shall be nicely quizzed and laughed at," said Fred Lamb. "Harry Windham and Lord Egremont alighted here this

morning, on their road to His Lordship's house at Brighton. They asked me so many questions as to where I was going, that I was obliged to confess I was waiting for somebody to meet me. They remained with me an hour. 'Why, you will not wait any longer, surely,' said Harry! 'Who can the cruel fair one be?' It was too bad of you."

"Well, do not scold," I answered, "for I could not help it."

Fred Lamb had a book in his pocket, and he read to me, in the garden, while our dinner was preparing. His remarks on the fine poem he read were very sensible; but his manner of reading, like that of his brother William, I dislike: it might rather be called singing; and yet some say it is proper, and all admit it to be the fashion to read so.

We had an excellent dinner, and, as long as I saw day-light, I kept in pretty good spirits; but when the waiter brought us candles, and we seemed as though settled for the night at The Cock at Sutton, my heart completely failed me. I tried hard to reason myself out of this repugnance. I argued with myself that, since I had already been under Frederic's protection, one night more or less could not make much difference,—that to leave him now, were to treat him really ill, and make, perhaps, a bitter enemy of a man well disposed towards me: but all would not do. I cannot help it, said I to myself, in a sort of frenzy; I would rather die than pass another whole night with Fred Lamb, now the thing is gone by, and I have been so attached to another. My case was desperate; for I almost equally dreaded telling Lamb I would not stay with him.

"Fred Lamb," said I, at last, absolutely pale with terror, "I really must return to town to-night. Do not ask me why, for you may be sure, if I wished to stay, I should not go; and, if I do not, my society cannot be worth having, to a man of taste, who can easily make himself beloved and desired by more likeable objects than I am. You will, I know, have a right to reproach me with caprice, because my good heart made me wish to avoid the appearance of unkindness towards an old friend, *mais vous savez bien que les passions ne se commandent pas.*"

Fred Lamb, on this occasion, behaved very well, and very gentlemanlike, much as his pride and feelings were hurt. He ordered out my carriage, and accompanied me home with friendly politeness, nor did he make a single unpleasant observation on my refusal to remain there.

The favourite topic, on my arrival in town, was the Marquis of Anglesea's elopement with the wife of Sir Henry Wellesley. His Grace of Argyle was soon expected to console Lady Anglesea by the offer of his hand and heart, in case that good lady could contrive, by hook or by crook, by English law, or by Scotch law, to obtain her liberty.

Amy Madden, alias Sydenham, alias Argyle, had long been led to believe, according to her own account, that she was to become the legitimate wife of the Duke of Argyle. At last, when Amy was very near her confinement, Argyle, fearful lest the sad truth might fall heavier on her tender heart from a third person than from his own lips, one fine morning, after breakfast, having, no doubt, previously fortified himself with a bumper of brandy, for Amy was a practical Tartar, opened to her, with the utmost delicacy he was master of, the appalling fact that he was about to marry Lady Anglesea.

Amy had an hysterical fit, or was afflicted with sore eyes, I forget which; but I know that she was very bad, and vented her rage in all the refined expressions usual on these most celebrated occasions. It will scarcely be expected that I should feel much commiseration for her. When I state these facts, it must be understood that Amy said so; but then, will methodistical Luttrell add, with his eyes turned up towards the sky, or the ceiling, as the chance may be—if all the lies that have been uttered since the flood, were put into a scale with Amy's, they would weigh as a hair in the balance; so that, perhaps, the less I say on this matter the better.

At last, when a whole month had elapsed beyond the period Amy had named for the expected event, Argyle could keep on the mask no longer; and, having asked her, one evening, how she felt, and received for answer, that she was perfectly well and

free from pain, he said, in a passion, "Why, Amy, you are surely a Johanna Southcott, and never mean to be confined at all." This was certainly very cruel, though, no less certainly, circumstances did rather appear to justify such a suspicion!

At last, oh, blessed news for Argyle! Amy declared she felt a slight pain; but whether it proceeded from the sweet pledge of love she carried in her bosom, from wind, or from what else, Time was to determine: and my kind readers will probably recollect that, in a like protracted case, old Time determined against the late Marchioness of Buckingham, without the least respect to all the splendid paraphernalia which had been profusely got up for the anticipated joyful occasion. Amy, however, not being quite so stricken in years, Argyle bustled about, in the joyful hopes of a speedy deliverance, and said, "No harm in sending to Dr. Merriman, and getting the knocker tied up, and a little straw laid before the door!" As to the nurse, she had been in the house for the last month!

By the time the knocker was tied up, the straw laid down, and Dr. Merriman shown upstairs into her room, Amy declared herself quite well again, and so she continued for another week.

"Good Lord deliver us!" exclaimed Argyle.

"Amen!" responded the old nurse: for who would differ from a duke; however pleasant it might be to enjoy present pay and good quarters for doing nothing!

I cannot help pitying anything in labour, even a mountain! At length Amy herself really experienced the so often anticipated pains. She now declared that she could not stand it; and would not, that was more!

"Give me a pair of scissors!" said she, in a fury, to the doctor, "and I will cut my own throat directly."

Dr. Merriman answered, with *perfect sang froid*,——

Apropos! I do remember this said Dr. Merriman, of Curzon-street, an apothecary, and often has he stood behind his uncle's counter to serve me, when I was a child, and fond of sweets, with a pennyworth of Spanish liquorice. His father was a respectable *accoucheur*, and had the honour to bring all my

respectable family into this respectable world, one by one, except my youngest sister Julia; and he would have done as much by her, but that he happened to die one day, and the present Dr. Merriman, his nephew, formerly designated Sam Merriman, officiated, *faute de mieux*, my dear mother being too shy to endure the idea of a stranger.

As soon as he got possession of his dead uncle's carriage, he took the small liberty of cutting the shop, Spanish liquorice and all, and ventured to change the name of Sam, for the more dignified one of Doctor, but it would not pass current everywhere. Many refused to pay a fee, and voted him ignorantus, ignoranta, ignorantum! and so Sam, *à force de battre le fer*, contrived to take out a degree, and became Dr. Merriman, indeed, at any lady's service.

"My dear lady," said the Doctor to Amy, in answer to her request for a pair of scissors to cut her own throat, "my dear lady, I should be happy to oblige you, if you could first insure my own neck"; and then, turning to the nurse, as he warmed his hands by the fire, "I always let them halloa, and make just as much noise as they like; but, for myself, as it will be necessary for me to pass the night here, I shall thank you to give me some warm blankets, on that sofa; with a cup of tea, and a bottle of wine."

In due season, the gentle Amy was delivered of a fine boy by my old friend Sam Merriman, and was duly announced to be as well as could be expected. For another fortnight, Amy contrived to keep Argyle in London, as might be supposed, to his no small annoyance, just on the eve of his approaching nuptials with Lady Anglesea. The time, however, did at length arrive, when His Grace took his departure northward, to the destruction of all the airy visions which had long flitted before the anxious eyes of Amy, who had adorned them with ducal coronets, and almost every other attribute of a resolutely ambitious and selfish mind. She declared that her death must be perfectly an event of course; yet she got up in a month, as blooming and well as she had ever been in her life. It is true

she worked herself up into a dreadful frenzy of passion, when anybody told her that the Duchess of Argyle was, or would soon be, in the way which all ladies who love their lords wish to be in; but she was easily consoled by adding a few years to Her Grace's age, or detracting from the Duchess's charms, personal or mental.

Enough of Amy. I hate to dwell long on any subject, unless, indeed, it were the merits of these, my most interesting and valuable memoirs! which I assure you might have been better still—but that Mr. Stockdale won't let me, or anyone else, study and correct them. "The merit of such a light work as this," stupidly says he, "is, that it is written without study, and naturally, and just as you converse. There are learned books enough, and more than people are aware of, all written with such correct precision as to defy the Edinburgh Reviewers themselves! and yet half of them do not take, although months have been spent in poring over heavy volumes, to secure the accuracy of a single date. This research is highly creditable in its way; but since the world, in their rage for variety, require a little of everything, write you in your own natural language, and of life, manners, and men, as they strike you, and, take my word for it, your own genuine spirit will please, and the book will sell." So here am I, seated on an easy chair, at No. 111, in the *Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré, à Paris*, writing, not for the benefit of my readers, but for my own amusement and profit to boot, and in the full expectation that my work is to pass the twentieth edition!! *Apropos*, I have just got a letter from Stockdale, who tells me that he has hopes, even beyond what he at first anticipated, as to the success of my memoirs; but then he consents to observe my directions as to the pretty pictures! which, he says, shall certainly adorn the work before it gets to the conclusion.

Love me, love my dog!

Apropos to what? says the reader.

I really don't know. I have had my head leaning on my finger, which is my usual attitude, as you see me in the portrait,

for the last three minutes, after I had finished the word edition, considering what was to be my next subject.

I yesterday dined with a lady, who assured me that it often cost her an hour to begin a letter; but, having once decided on the first five or six words, she could scribble on till doomsday.

I'll put anything down, said I to myself, just now, if only to try my fortune in that way, and, looking towards my window, from which I have a full view of everybody who passes in the Faubourg St. Honoré, I saw a thin *ancien régime*-looking powdered Frenchman, in a threadbare coat, and a pair of yellow old silk stockings, which showed, to much disadvantage, what I suppose he calls *les beaux restes* of his calves.

It is rakish and interesting, says Lord Foley, to have a thin leg; but you must never admit that you were not born with a large calf, while you declare that your high breeding has left you only *les beaux restes*.

However, to proceed with my Frenchman in the threadbare coat, who just now stopped near my wondow, to take off his hat to an opulent-looking man with a large black dog.

What sort of a man is an opulent-looking man? perhaps the reader may inquisitively ask, and particularly if he should happen to belong to that fraternity vulgarly called black-legs.

Why, gentlemen, if you will take off your dreadful Thurtell-looking, white great-coats, and sit down quietly, and not frighten one, I will tell you.

I generally guess to be opulent, a man who, being vulgar, and with the air and manners of low birth, appears not at all proud of a new coat, which he wears not well brushed, and a chain of value, which is not dragged too forward; and generally appears discontented with whatever poor men are most apt to admire. He likewise makes a particular sort of bow; putting on his hat less ceremoniously than he has taken it off to salute you, as though, on second thoughts, it had scarcely been worth his while. All these, my favourite marks, had the man whom the thin old beau just now saluted with such profound respect.

The supposed opulent man, apparently to the great surprise

and delight of the poor one, made a full stop, and addressed him.—While they were conversing, the large, black, dirty dog jumped on his hind legs, and began playing with the thin old beau, covering him with mud. Instead of driving the nasty animal away, in anger, as I fully expected, he caressed and patted him, as though quite enchanted. The opulent man, whose frightful dog I should imagine had never before been tolerated, appeared all gratitude and respect for him, who saw his qualities, with the same partial eyes that he did himself.

Love me, love my dog, said I to myself, and, trusting to providence for what was to follow, I put the words down in my manuscript. It is a very natural feeling, certainly, yet many carry it much too far. I have known men, and women too, who could love nothing for the life of them, however amiable, with whom everybody was not charmed! Some men quarrel with those who will not admire their mistress; others love her no longer than she happens to continue the fashion; if, indeed, one may dignify such selfish feelings of admiration as originate only in vanity by the appellation of love! Still it is perfectly natural to desire that our friends, and those we respect, should sanction our affections, by partaking of our admiration.

It is sweet to do a great many things, Lord Byron said, and he might have added, how very sweet and pure is the delight we all experience at the genuine, spontaneous praise bestowed on the object of our choice.

Lord Ponsonby was, certainly, one of the most reserved and shy men in England, and, being a married man, was naturally, for many reasons, desirous of concealing his affections, when his wife was not their object. One day, during the time we were living together, I walked into the Green Park, with my young brother George. We met Lord Ponsonby, in a barouche, accompanied by his sister, Lady Howick.

"What two merry lovely faces are those?" said her kind Ladyship to her brother. "How closely they resemble each other! What a delightful girl! The boy of course must be her brother."

Ponsonby always described this, as one of the very happiest moments of his life, nor could all his dread of notoriety, his constitutional reserve, and his sense of what was due, both to his wife and his sister, prevent his acknowledging, in answer to Lady Howick's question, why he blushed so deeply? that we had loved each other for more than a year.

"Oh, for shame, John!" said his good-natured sister, at least so Lord Ponsonby told me, but then to be sure, this very nice girl does resemble Lady Ponsonby extremely.

"Do you think that fine boy, her brother, would like to go to sea?"

Ponsonby said he would inquire.

"I have taken such a fancy to your Harriette," continued Lady Howick, "that I wish I could be of service to her I; know I can make Lord Howick send her brother out as a midshipman."

It was very, very kind!

My little brother wished to go out, and I was ready to do my best to fit him out. Lord Ponsonby was very persevering about it for more than a month; but my poor mother wanted courage to part with so young, and, certainly, so fine a boy. . . .

CHAPTER IX

WHAT do you all think of Elliston, the actor? I will tell you my opinion. He is one of the most mercenary, selfish creatures I ever met with. I once thought better of him; that was at the very beginning of our acquaintance. I had absolutely been in love with the man, ever since I accompanied my mother to witness his performance in the comedy of the "Honeymoon". Elliston, in the character of the duke, appeared so very manly, so very gentlemanlike, so everything which a man ought to be to win a fair lady's heart, that I did not recover myself for more than a fortnight.

One day, little Livius, of some dragoon regiment which I have forgotten, having only a sort of bowing, nodding acquaintance with him, met me in Great Portland-street. He touched his hat, and begged pardon for running after me; but knowing my talent, he was anxious to obtain my opinion of a little farce he was about to bring out at Drury-lane Theatre, under the title of "Maid and Wife".

"Will you appoint a time to call on me, and read your piece?" said I.

"Yes, provided you promise to give me your frank and most candid opinion of it, whether good or bad."

I promised to do this, on my word, and nine o'clock, on the next evening, was fixed for his reading the farce to me.

Livius was punctual; he read his little piece with spirit, and played and sung the songs. They were borrowed from the French, as was the farce, but Livius had adapted it, with some taste, to the English stage. It was *un assez joli petit rien*, and I doubted not would have its run, for a fortnight at least. I

expressed my approbation, at which Livius did me the honour to appear very proud.

"Elliston, himself, is kind enough to play one of my characters, and the others he has given to his very best performers."

"What a charming actor is Elliston," I remarked.

"Would you like to be acquainted with him?" said Livius.

"Of all things in the world," I replied. "The impression he made on me when I was only thirteen years of age, I have not forgotten yet."

"If then," added Livius, "you will allow me to make up your party for the play to-morrow, I have a private box at your service, and I will invite the Hon. George Lamb to join us. Elliston plays in "Wild Oats'; but he will come to us between the acts, or after the play, I have no doubt. At any rate, with your permission, we will all sup together, at my hotel in Dover-street. I have very good rooms there, and three pianofortes, on either of which I shall be delighted to hear you play."

I assured him that I would hold myself in readiness at any hour he would appoint to call for me.

"Will you be offended if I venture to introduce a young lady to you?" Livius asked.

"Not at all, provided you permit me to cut her dead in case her society should not be to my taste."

"Certainly," said Livius; and after begging me to expect him, in his own carriage, at seven on the following evening, he left me.

Livius's little farce of "Maid and Wife" was advertised for the approaching Monday. On that day, Livius and a pretty, weak, childish, young lady, found our way to a private box at Drury-lane Theatre, just at the close of the first act of "Wild Oats". We were soon joined by my own faithful Frederic's brother, the Hon. George Lamb, to whom I was presented by Livius. I immediately began to discuss the merits and demerits of Frederic, with my usual and abrupt frankness.

"Can anything be more ridiculous," I exclaimed, "than the rage which is caused alone by your not returning a man's

passion! Why blame one, for what really cannot be helped?"

"Very fine talking," retorted George Lamb, "but in fact, love is the most arbitrary passion we are susceptible of. If you torture a man, he must naturally hate you."

"Do you believe in God?" I asked.

"*Et vous, Madame?*" said George Lamb.

"I do indeed," I replied, "believe in His goodness, but not in His vengeance. I dread and abhor the idea of offending Him; because I believe he would forgive all my faults."

George Lamb looked incredulous.

"If I do really believe in a God, and an hereafter, would you have me affect to be a disbeliever: because there is an ironical smile on your countenance?"

"Not at all," replied George Lamb, with honest truth, or the resemblance of it at least: "not at all; those who do believe in God are mean and contemptible, when they feel ashamed of confessing their faith."

Take him all in all, I rather like George Lamb, notwithstanding they say he does eat too much dinner, which occasions him to drink too much wine, in order to wash too much dinner down. This does not however prevent his being one of the frankest men I ever met with.

I did not altogether like Elliston in "Wild Oats". He made too many faces, and reminded me of the minor theatres, where grimace is in considerable request. Perhaps, also, since the time I fell in love with him in the "Honeymoon," he was all the worse for having presided over a small theatre, as manager, for several years. He joined us after the play, and being tipsy, which is generally the case with him, I thought him very pleasant, although, as I have since discovered, there is not a heavier, more matter-of-fact, stupid companion on earth than Elliston, when he is sober.

I asked George Lamb if he had heard of Mr. Livius's new piece?

"Part of it only; but, from what I saw, I think it must be a very lively *petite comédie*," answered Lamb.

Elliston made very free with us all, and especially with George Lamb.

As soon as the curtain dropped, and we were all seated in the carriage, Elliston got in a passion with Livius's coachman, for not immediately moving on.

"What the devil is the matter?" said he, "what detains your man? All this fuss about a rascally three hundred pound house, and not twenty carriages! !"

"I told you Munden's day was over, and that he would not fill the house, before you engaged him for to-night,"—said George Lamb.

"I say," answered Elliston, "Munden would have filled the house, if it had been a fine night."

"Not he," said George Lamb, "your crownation might, but not Munden!"

"Hold your tongue, you are a Whig," said Elliston; and George Lamb was silent, after a grunt.

"But what in the name of the devil is your ass of a coachman keeping us here for?" said Elliston. "Why, Livius, I thought you piqued yourself on being, at all times, remarkably well appointed."

Livius confessed he knew not what to make of it; and put out his head to inquire of his footman what was the reason of being kept stationary.

The footman's voice was drowned by the vociferation of Elliston from the opposite window.

"Where's Townsend, or any of the constables?"

A constable approached the carriage.

"Why the devil don't you manage better?" roared out Elliston, "why is the road blocked up in this manner?"

"It is not blocked up at all, Mr. Elliston," answered the constable, "it's nothing in the world but the coachman, as is so drunk he can't sit on his box."

"God bless my soul!" said Livius, and then he called out again to his footman, to know what was the matter.

The footman either could not, or did not choose to explain.

"Get you then on the box, and drive us home, Jem," said Livius.

No sooner said, than done. Jem, having mounted the box, entreated his fellow-servant to give up the reins.

"Touch my honour, touch my life," said the coachman, who absolutely refused to part with the whip.

"D——n his rascally drunken soul!" said Elliston, trying to force open the carriage-door. "I'll settle him. Trust me for having him off his perch in half a second. Of all things I abhor a drunkard! !"

"For God's sake, Elliston, be quiet," said George Lamb.

"You seem to take it perfectly easy," said I to Lamb, "seeing that all our precious necks are in danger!"

"We must take our chance," answered Lamb, quietly. "The only thing I particularly dread, is the idea of Elliston attempting to drive us home himself: I can bear anything but that." The coachman and footman now appeared to be fighting on the box; Livius was scolding and bawling out of one window, Elliston *faisant un bruit telle qu'il n'y en eu jamais en enfer*, at the other, because he could not get the coach-door open, and nobody would come to his assistance. At last he succeeded; the footman made room for him on the box, and Elliston quietly threw the drunken coachman off on to the pavement, box-coat and all, in spite of his swearing and kicking.

Livius got out of the carriage, and picked the man up, to ascertain that he was alive, as he fell without uttering a groan.

"Oh! for shame, you cowardly wretch, to treat an honest, poor coachman in that brutal way! Why you've killed him, poor dear soul!" said an old hag, who happened to pass at the instant.

Elliston, still smarting with the knocks, kicks, and scratches he had got in his scuffle with the obstinate coachman, was not in a very gentle humour. The woman forced herself in his way, and he, I presume, pushed her rather ungallantly aside.

"Oh you coward! oh you coward!" screamed out the woman; "strike a woman! eh? Here's a coward for you!"

"Oh! Mr. Elliston," said I, shaking my head at him, as he stood at the carriage-window.

"I only touched her just so," said Elliston, tapping me on the head.

"Just so!" repeated his fair antagonist, "why, he has half kill'd me! Here, watchman! watchman!"

The rattle was sprung, and behold Elliston and Livius surrounded by the guardians of the night.

What became of the coachman, I know not; but, in about five minutes more, Elliston jumped into the carriage, and ordered the footman to drive to Mr. Livius's hotel, in Dover-street.

"Where is Livius?" asked we all three, in a breath.

"Gone to the watch-house," said Elliston, with the most perfect composure.

"How so?" asked George Lamb.

"What has he done?" inquired the young lady, in a pet, declaring that no one had been to blame but Elliston; therefore she would not stir till Mr. Livius was safe.

"Nonsense, nonsense! fair lady. Let him use my name at the watch-house!"

"Where, I presume, you are well known, Mr. Mountebank," added I.

"One of us must have gone," said Elliston, laughing, "and I tell you he will join us before we have finished our supper. It serves him right for having a drunken coachman. Why all our necks would have been broken by this time, but for me."

"To hear that man talk," said George Lamb, "one might almost be led to believe he was a very fine fellow!"

On our arrival at Livius's lodgings, in Dover-street, we found an elegant cold supper laid out, with plenty of champagne on the sideboard.

"Your master is gone to the watch-house," said Elliston, "and has requested me to do the honours. Ah! ah!" continued he, taking up one of the soup plates, "we have white soup, I presume. I am very fond of white soup, and am very hungry. Pray, bring it up directly."

The young lady and I declared that it was a shame and a sin to sit down without Livius.

George Lamb begged leave to differ in opinion; because he wanted his supper.

Ellison insisted, and the white soup made its appearance. In about a quarter of an hour after we were seated, Livius entered the room, quite out of breath.

"Did not I tell you he would soon join us?" said Elliston. "Sit down, my dear Livius. Your white soup was so excellent that there is none left. You used my name, of course, at the watch-house?"

"If he had, he would have been kept there for a week," observed George Lamb, and Elliston laughed heartily, though very slily.

"This," said Elliston, drawing out a small unbound volume from his pocket, "this is the French farce, from which Kemble has taken the new piece he is to bring out next Thursday. What think you of our getting it up the same evening?"

"Let me see it," said Livius. Elliston desired that he would translate a few lines.

George Lamb and Elliston, together, after they had listened to a page or two, with one voice, exclaimed, "Very stupid".

"Mine is but mere literal translation," said Livius. "Harriette, no doubt, could make something of it."

"Will you oblige me by undertaking it, madam," inquired Elliston, "and completing it in two days?"

"If anybody can be found to accomplish the songs," I observed, "I won't be behind hand."

"I will rhyme them in English," said George Lamb, "if you really wish it."

"And I will set them to music," added Livius, "provided Mr. Lamb will sit up all night to get them done in time for me."

"I think it won't answer," said George, "and be only tiring the poor performers, as well as ourselves, to no purpose; but, if you really have fixed your heart upon the thing, I will devote a night, and finish the songs."

Elliston waxed more generous as he waxed more drunk, and suddenly throwing the farce behind the fire, exclaimed, "This competition with the other house is paltry and ungentlemanlike. I will have none of it. It is in too bad a taste; besides," said he, half in mockery, "Mr. Livius's piece is to have such a run, we shall want nothing else all the season!"

"*Apropos* of that little piece," said I, "I wish Livius would play the songs, and sing them to us."

Livius was immediately seated at the pianoforte. When he got to the last chorus, song, Elliston jumped up, declaring he was to sing that with the rest, and had not yet heard a word of it. He then began, with a serious face, accompanying Livius,

"Oh, 'tis love, 'tis love, 'tis love."

"Elliston!" bawled out George Lamb, "why the deuce don't you come and finish your supper? I want to speak to you."

Elliston took no notice; but continued his "Oh! 'tis love, 'tis love, 'tis love."

"Livius, then," said George Lamb, "I want to ask you whether you have places to spare for your night?"

"Elliston won't allow me to leave off," replied Livius, still continuing to play to Elliston's "Oh! 'tis love, 'tis love, 'tis love!"

"Leave off, you blockhead!" said George Lamb to Elliston. "I will lay you fifty guineas that you do not repeat one line, as Livius has written it, either in your song or your speech."

Elliston appeared to agree, and give up the matter as hopeless, for, darting from the pianoforte towards Livius's young female friend, who still continued at table, he gave her such an ardent embrace, that she was quite frightened, and then, as I sat next, he conferred the same honour on me.

"Good heavens! what a mountebank is here!" said I, pushing him from me.

George Lamb sat next, for he had not half finished his supper. Elliston placed himself in a theatrical attitude, ready to embrace him.

"And as to you, my George!" said he, with much pathos.

"For God's sake," exclaimed George Lamb, with his mouth full of dried cherries, "for God Almighty's sake, do not play the fool with me!"

Elliston now seated himself by my side, and said, in a whisper, "Don't you want tea?"

"No, but you do, I see," answered I, "and I had the charity to request Livius to give me some tea."

Elliston did the honours of the tea-table. The tea had a surprising effect in making him stupid; because it made him sober. He politely offered me his private box, for Livius's night, and regretted that it was not a better one. It was a large box, on the stage; but rather too high up. Livius had a private box to himself, and tickets for a host of friends.

"It is three o'clock," said I at last, "and I dare not risk my *petite santé* another instant."

"Good people are so scarce!" added George Lamb.

"No," I added, "I am good for very little. You will find better people every day, and wiser; but nobody at all like me."

George Lamb expressed himself quite of this opinion.

It was past four o'clock in the morning when I got home.

The Duke of Leinster, Harry De Roos and Sophia dined with me on the following day. Just as we were about to sit down to dinner, Lord Deerhurst was announced.

"Dear me, how tiresome," said Sophia.

"Do not send him here, pray," said Leinster and De Roos in the same breath. I went down to ask him what he wanted, and informed him of my dinner-party, with whom I knew he was unacquainted.

"Oh, I wish much to know the Duke of Leinster, so pray do introduce me," said Deerhurst.

"No," I answered, "I shall do no such thing. That's frank and flat. If you don't like Sophia to dine here, you may, with her consent, take her away with you, but I will never present you to any friend of mine. Sophia told you, this morning, that she was to meet the Duke of Leinster and his cousin."

"Certainly," answered Deerhurst, "I have not the slightest objection; but do, there's a dear, good creature, present me to the Duke of Leinster."

"You are, in all and everything, the meanest man on earth," was my civil remark.

"You refuse then?" said Deerhurst.

"I do," repeated I, impatiently, "and you must now allow me to wish you a good morning, as we were going to dinner immediately."

"Then," said Deerhurst, "I must introduce myself, that's all"; and; disregarding all I could say or do to prevent him, he ran into the drawing-room, took off his hat with a low bow, and said;

"Duke, allow me to introduce, and earnestly recommend to your notice, Viscount Deerhurst."

The Duke had no pride, and was very mean and stingy, nobody more so; but he paid his bills, and was what the world calls an honourable man. To do him common justice, I do not think he would like to break his word, however much it might be to his interest, and well as he loved money. He disliked Deerhurst's character, and was too natural, and not half polite enough, to conceal his displeasure at being so unceremoniously intruded upon. He bowed very slightly, without speaking, and the smile with which he greeted His Lordship was scarcely perceptible.

Harry de Roos was as proud as he was shy, and took no sort of notice of Deerhurst, beyond rising from his chair, when His Lordship turned from His Grace to his cousin.

Deerhurst's stock of assurance was not to be diminished by two mere boys. He seated himself near Sophia, ever certain of her unqualified approbation, at all events.

"Well, Soph, my love, are you glad to see me?"

"Yes, I am very glad indeed," replied Sophia.

"I'll tell you something, Lord Deerhurst," said I. "I do not like quarrelling with people, and especially in my own house; but, seriously, I must tell you that these gentlemen expected to

meet Sophia and me only, and your intrusion is really a little cool."

Sophia said I was quite right, it really was very cool indeed, and she had heard His Grace request that we would fix on a day when nobody else was coming.

"If His Grace will say he wishes to get rid of me, I am off," remarked His Lordship.

What could the easy-tempered Leinster do less than declare his happiness to see him?

Deerhurst possesses talents, and can be very agreeable. He was growing tired of being cut by so many respectable people; therefore he set about winning the friendship of the Duke of Leinster. He talked of sailing, and boats, big fiddles, and Irish watchmen; praised to the skies such of the Irish nobility as lived on their estates, and imitated the Irish brogue as though he had been practising it all the days of his life. Leinster was delighted with him.

After dinner, Luttrell called to say that Amy gave her first party, since her confinement, on this evening, and had permitted him to say that, as it was a mutual convenience that we should meet, civilly, at parties, and neither friendship nor intimacy was necessary for that purpose, she was ready to ratify the engagement made between us, a few years back, to offer me no insult, and desired I would go to her, in the course of the evening, and bring as many of my male friends as I pleased.

I asked Leinster and de Roos, if they would like to take me to Amy's with them?

"Most willingly," was their answer.

"Make no apologies for not asking me," said Deerhurst, "for, with all my impudence, I do not think I could face that tartar of a sister of yours, without a special invitation."

"Are you fond of looking at jewellery?" I asked Luttrell.

"Very," answered Luttrell," and I believe I am rather a good judge too."

"Then," said I, "Sophia, my dear, if you have brought your jewels with you, pray ask Mr. Luttrell's opinion of their value."

Sophia drew from her reticule two smart jewel-boxes, of Love, the jeweller's. "These are the jewels which were presented to my sister by Viscount Deerhurst," said I, as I handed them to Mr. Luttrell.

The box contained a necklace of large green glass beads, set in yellow metal. There was a leaden ring, with a blue bead in it, a small Tunbridge-ware tooth-pick case with

"When this you see, remember me"

superscribed on it, and two brass seals, one with the name of Sophia on it, the other with a little winged figure, evidently meant for a cupid, or a parrot; but it was very difficult to decide which it most resembled. Everybody laughed heartily, but the loudest laugher of our party was Viscount Deerhurst.

"And then," said Deerhurst, trying to recover himself, "and then, having won the young lady by dint of these valuable jewels, Robinson, the attorney of Bolton Street, first draws up an agreement to secure to her an annuity of three hundred a year, and the next day tells you his agreement is not worth sixpence! !"

There was only one of our society who carried politeness so far as to seem amused at such disgusting profligacy.

Luttrell looked with unqualified contempt on His Lordship. Leinster and de Roos, considering themselves too young to set an example, or reform the age, fixed their eyes steadily on the carpet, while de Roos's fair cheek was tinged with a deep blush. Sophia alone joined Lord Deerhurst in his laugh; declaring that it was very funny to be sure.

"Lord Deerhurst," said I, "Sophia is my sister, and, if she chooses to submit to insult and ill usage from you, it shall not be in my house, where you were not invited."

Sophia immediately worked herself up into a passion of tears, declaring that she did not want to be insulted, and would much rather not return to Lord Deerhurst, who, she was sure, was a very nasty man indeed, and hardly ever washed his head.

Deerhurst, carelessly, declared himself quite ready to support

the dire calamity, and wished, of all things, Sophia would live with her sister Harriette.

"The man is not worth a thought, much less a tear," said I to Sophia. "You are welcome to my house, as long as I have got one to share with you; in the meantime let us drive to Amy's." Sophia did not accompany us; but retired with Lord Deerhurst, who had remarked in her ear, that I was jealous, and wanted him myself.

"I think Harriette is a little jealous really, so I'll go home with you, to make her mad," said Sophia.

And off they went.

Amy's drawing-room was quite full. She looked very well, and fairer, as well as less fierce, than before her confinement. Fanny appeared unusually lovely, dressed in a pale, pink, crape dress, which set off her rosy, white, delicate skin, to the greatest advantage; and with her unadorned bright auburn curls, waving carelessly around her laughing dark blue eyes and beautiful throat, she seemed the most desirable object in the room. Julia was very fair too; perhaps her skin was whiter than Fanny's, and of quite as delicate a texture; but it had not the vermillion tinge, and the blue veins were less defined. Both were of the highest order of fine forms. They were also of the same height, which was that best adapted to perfect symmetry; their feet and ankles were alike models for the statuary's art, and Fanny's shoes fitted Julia, as well as her own; but Fanny's hair was dark, and more glossy than Julia's. Fanny's teeth were beautiful, while Julia's, though strong, were uneven; and Fanny's smile was infinitely more attractive than Julia's, whose countenance was, in fact, as I think I have before mentioned, rather harsh than pleasing. Yet there was such a decided resemblance, in their *tout ensemble* that everybody mistook Julia for Fanny's eldest sister.

This evening Julia, I suppose with a view to outshine us all, wore a dress of white silvered lama, on gauze, and a Turkish turban of bright blue, fringed with gold. There was a voluptuous and purely effeminate langour about Julia's character

which was well adapted to the eastern style of dress. The large, straight, gauze sleeve, did not at all conceal the symmetry of her beautiful arm. Fanny's dimpled arms were quite uncovered, and encircled with elegant but simple bracelets, composed of plaited hair, clasped with a magnificently brilliant ruby. They were both infinitely graceful. Fanny would lay her laughing face on her folded arms, reclining on a table, while she made some odd reflections; or she would fasten her pocket handkerchief, or her shawl, across her head and ears, when she felt the air affect her head without inquiring of her glass whether she had thus added to or diminished her attractions: yet everything became her; or rather all were determined to think faultless her in whose beautiful eyes shone the warmest philanthropy, whose every word and action proved the desire she ever felt to make others appear to advantage.

Julia's attitudes, though graceful, were studied and luxurious, but always modest and effeminate.

Amy wore a yellow satin dress, fastened round the waist, with a gold band. Her profuse raven-locks were entirely unadorned, and her neck, arms, and fingers, were covered with glittering jewels of every colour. My own evening dresses were invariably composed of rich figured white French gauze, over white satin; and I never wore any ornaments in my hair, of which I was not a little proud; but my ear-rings were of unusual length, and consisted of diamonds, rubies and turquoise stones. A Mrs. Armstrong, whom Amy had lately patronised, was of the party. She was the *chère amie* of Colonel Armstrong, an aide-de-camp of the Duke of York. It was said of the Duchess, that she carried her charity so far as to send yearly presents to the mistress of her royal husband's aide-de-camp; but if this were really true, I have always heard that, in all but the ceremony of marriage, the mother of Colonel Armstrong's children, from her steady adherence to her protector, during seven years, and her resistance of temptation, which assailed her in every shape, deserved the encouragement of the great and the good.

In spite of the strict economy which she invariably practised,

the Colonel had lately decided that his circumstances would not, in common prudence, admit of his running the slightest risk of increasing his family.

"We will be excellent friends, my love," said he to his better half, "but friends only." This may be very easy at the age of fifty; but his Lucy was still in the prime of youth, possessing very warm passions, and old as he was, she loved her Tommy dearly, and was very melancholy at his determination.

"We cannot have separate beds, you know, my dear," said Lucy; "because there is not a spare bed in the house."

"That is true, my love," answered her Tommy, "but it really must be all the same."

Lucy sighed heavily.

"Go and visit your friend Amy, my dear," said the kind Colonel; "it will enliven you; and since our family is not to be increased, I can afford to put my last dozen of shirts out to be made. Now that our boy William can run alone, there is no necessity for my poor Lucy making such a slave of herself."

Alas! thought poor Lucy, I am terribly afraid of being tempted, in Amy's gay society; but she did not say so.

Lucy was a very neat, lady-like little creature, who used to wear very fine muslin gowns ornamented with her own beautiful embroidery. Her teeth were extremely white and regular, and her lips of bright vermillion; but I could not discern any other beauty in her. Nevertheless she was a great favourite with the men, and would make fifty conquests while Julia was bungling with one. Lucy had a way of disarming the most impudent, when they attempted to take the slightest liberty with her: not by her dignified deportment, nor by her wit; but by the mere simplicity of her truly modest carriage, which was so far removed from prudery that nobody knew how to offend her.

This evening was set apart for dancing, and Fanny and Julia, being the very best dancers in the room, were in their glory.

All the world were, or wished they were there, but many could not get farther than the passage, the whole house being

so crammed. Among others was the man they call the dancing Montgomery, although, perhaps, I do him too much honour by putting him in print; he was such a slovenly unlicked cub, of what particular family I am ignorant; but it was clear this man had originally been designed by nature for a lout, only he went to Paris, and came home a dancer, every inch of him, below the girdle. As for his shoulders and arms, they continued as before; Frenchmen cannot work miracles, like German princes! but they converted into a fop this ready-made clown, to the utter discomfiture of our gauzes, and India muslins, which were sure to suffer, as often as we ventured to employ him to hand us tea, negus, or orgeat.

"Would you like to dance?" said George Brummell to Mrs. Armstrong, *en passant*.

"I have only just left off," answered she, rising and courtesying with much politeness; "but I am never tired of dancing."

"You have a dancing face," Brummell quietly observed, fixing his eyes steadily on her countenance for a second or two, and then passing on.

Poor Lucy, she afterwards declared to us, was never so ashamed and humbled since she had been born.

All this time, Montgomery's thick straight locks were steadily beating time, on his watery forehead, as he trod the mazy dance with all his might, footing it away most scholastically. He did indeed dance famously; but then he was always out at the elbows, which appeared to have no connexion whatever with his feet, particularly on this eventful night, when one of his elbows came in such neighbourly contact with the eye of the poor Duc de Berri, who was just entering the room, while Montgomery was swinging short corners near the door, as sent His Royal Highness reeling backwards.

Tout le monde fut au désespoir! !

"*Mon Dieu! Quel malheur, monsieur le duc!*" said Amy.

"*Rien, rien du tout,*" answered the good-natured Duc de Berri, holding his handkerchief to his eye.

"*Il y a tant de monde ici, ce soir, et la salle n'est pas grande,*

comme vous voyez, monsieur," said Fanny to His Highness; as usual endeavouring to excuse and conciliate all parties.

"*Ma fois! je n'y vois goutte!*" said the Duke, laughing, with his handkerchief still before his eyes.

Montgomery came forward to express his regrets; but it was plain, from his manner, that he did not at all attribute the accident to anything like awkwardness on the part of himself or his elbows, of which he seemed not a part. However, I do not mean to depreciate Mr. Montgomery's dancing, in the least; only do but give him elbow-room, and he will astonish you!

Mr. Quintin Dick, of Curzon-street, Mayfair, was now announced, and contrived to make his way towards Amy.

Quintin Dick is a man of fifteen or twenty thousand a year; at least, so I guess; for there is no subject on which people are more likely to be mistaken in, than that of private finances. However, in spite of his fortune, Quintin Dick is, and has been, one of the most unpopular men within the United Kingdom. By birth an Irishman, by trade a linen-draper, no, by-the-bye I am wrong, it was his father, who, they say, dealt in linen, and not Quintin himself, carrotty Quintin, of whom I cannot say I ever knew any particular harm. I, however, took it for granted that he was mean, and vilely shabby, having never heard two opinions on that point.

I remember Colonel Armstrong telling me one day, at Brighton, that the woman who ever got a shilling, or a shilling's worth, out of Mr. Quintin Dick, ought to be immortalized. I immediately resolved to make the attempt. Meeting Dick the next morning, on the Steyne, I told him that I had taken a fancy to an article of millinery, which I was, at that moment, too poor to purchase, though the price of it was under five pounds. Can it be credited! he actually requested permission to send it home! !

Armstrong would not believe me, till I shewed him the receipt. *Au reste*, Quintin is the man to whom somebody is said to have remarked, (observing that he wore the wrist-bands of his shirt sleeves so fashionably low as to pass his knuckles),

"I am sorry, Mr. Dick, to see that you have so much linen on hand." It strikes me, however, that this must be a joke of a hundred years old. No matter. He came this evening, to ask us three sisters, as well as Julia and Mrs. Armstrong, to dine with him on the approaching Saturday.

"Who are your men?" I asked.

"Lords Hertford and Alvanly, the Hon. J. Ward, Nugent, Luttrell, and another man or two whose names I have forgotten," Dick replied.

We all accepted his invitation on account of his party. For himself, he was a man of very few words. In fact, he scarcely ever spoke at all; and, when he did, he attempted to be satirical; but his were the very worst attempts I ever heard.

Montagu, the relation of the lady in Gloucester-place, of chimney-sweeping notoriety, assisted to keep up the spirit of the dance. Ward walked about, repeating Greek and Latin verses to himself as usual. He made love to Amy and Fanny alternately. I once knew a mistress of his, nay two! Perhaps I may tell you what sort of a character they gave him, some other time. Napier came sneaking and grinning into the room, and informed us, that either Lord Bath or Lord Bathurst, I forget which, was bringing him into parliament.

"More shame for you, who ought not to have given up your independence for millions," said I. "You cannot now vote against the man who give you a seat."

Napier shewed his teeth, merely observing, "You have such a comical way of talking to one."

Lord Fife now came sailing up the room, and all the women immediately made up to him; "My Lord," said one, "have you spoken to the manager about bringing my young friend out at the opera house this season?"

"Yes, yes," said Fife, nodding his head, "I saw him to-day; he expects her. When you take her to him send in my card, and he will receive you well."

"Dear Lord Fife," said another, "we want to go to Elliston's masquerade."

"Certainly, certainly, to be sure," answered the good-natured Fife, still nodding assent, "I will send you tickets to-morrow."

"And I," said Amy, "want a box at Covent-garden, on Monday."

"To be sure, to be sure," still continued the promising earl.

"Lord Fife," said I, "Sir Harcourt Lees wants to shoot grouse this season on your estate in the north."

"To be sure, tell me when he goes, and I'll give him a letter to my brother."

"I know an excellent old Frenchwoman," said Mrs. Armstrong, "who wants you to buy a watch of hers."

"Let her come to me in the morning, to be sure! to be sure!"

I could not help laughing at Lord Fife. "Why, what a good-natured man you are," said I.

"Oh!" answered Fife, "I have such female levees every morning you'd be surprised. People of the first respectability, I assure you, do me the honour to come, when they want money."

"How very condescending," said I.

"Too much so, sometimes, I can tell you," answered Fife; "for one morning last week, I gave £500 among them; but this, you know, will not quite do every morning: besides, time, time is what I regret; they take up all my time, I can't get out. It is often past seven before I can get into my carriage, for the life of me, and then I lose my dinner, to get out at all."

"Why don't you make your servants deny you," said I.

"Why, I tried that, but then my valet denied me, one day, to a charming creature whom I wished of all things to see, and I was obliged to open my doors to them all again, lest this sweet girl should re-visit me, and a second time be refused."

I think it was on this evening I saw Colonel Parker for the first time. He appeared to have seriously attached himself to my sister Fanny. He was an officer in the Artillery, and a near relation to Lady Hyde Parker, I believe. I was anxious to see poor Fanny comfortably settled; and her tastes being all so quiet, and her temper so amiable, I knew that riches were by

no means necessary to her felicity. Colonel Parker possessed a comfortable independence, and was very anxious to have Fanny entirely under his protection. "She shall bear my name, and I will show her all the respect a wife can require, and she shall always find me a gentleman," said he. I could not, however, help thinking that Fanny, with her strictly honest principles, her modest, amiable character, and her beauty, ought to have been Parker's wife, instead of his mistress, and therefore I did not advise her to live with him. His person was elegant; fine teeth and fine hair, was, however, all he had to boast of, in the way of beauty; but Fanny did not like handsome men, and appeared very much to admire and esteem Colonel Parker. I do not exactly know what aged man he was; but I should think him under thirty.

I could not but observe the gay Montagu and his wonderful luck in addressing himself to witty persons. He was now laughing himself almost into hysterics, at something Mr. Dick said to him at one of the windows. Then I heard him say, "Capital! Charming!" in answer to something which the Duc de Berri had said. At last I saw him talking to Leinster. This will decide it, said I to myself; for if he says anything is excellent, or charming, or capital! that His Grace utters, I know what I will do. I had scarcely settled the business in my own mind, when I saw Montagu blowing his nose in an agony of laughter, at something super-excellent, which he declared the poor bog-trotter, Leinster, had uttered! This was too much, well as I love a civil man; so, calling Montagu to my side, after having placed myself close to some noisy people, who were talking and gesticulating with all their might, I asked him if he had heard an excellent story about Amy and Harry Mildmay?

"No, but pray tell it me directly: it must be so very excellent."

"Listen then," said I, and I began to laugh and to say, "You must know Amy met Mildmay in the park"; and then I went on with a few unconnected words, affecting suitable action, and to be half dead, or quite choked with laughter. So far from repeating anything like a story, I did not connect two words of

common sense together; and, if I had, we were in such a noisy neighbourhood I could not have been heard; yet Montagu, with equal reason, once more gave full play to his risible faculties, and appeared quite as delighted with my story as he had been with Leinster's, declaring aloud it was the very best thing he had ever heard in his whole life.

But I am tired of this party of Amy's, therefore my kind readers will permit me to change the subject.

The next day, I was remarking to my young admirer, the Duke of Leinster, that life was nothing without a little love; and then begged him to say who was best worth having.

"I think the Duchess of Beaufort's brother, Lord George Leveson Gower, the most desirable man I ever saw," said Leinster.

"How is one to obtain a sight of your beauty?"

"I cannot assist you; and if I could I would not," His Grace replied.

I do not care, said I to myself, after Leinster had left me; I am not going to sit down all my life to love this fool. I must have something for the mind to feed on.

I was interrupted, while making these wise reflections, by a visit from Wellington!

Here is a thing in the shape of an intellectual companion, thought I!

After Wellington had left me, I entirely forgot him: nay before; for I now recollect that he said something about my bad taste in talking on subjects irrelevant to what was going on; such as a remark I might have made about my rose-tree, or my dinner, when I ought to have been all soul!! No matter! The soul's fire is partly kept alive by dinner; or, whether it is or not, still dinner, or even a rose-tree, is infinitely more interesting than the Wellington!

First love is all in all, say a great many writers, and a great many more old maids, particularly ugly ones, who have been courted only once for first and last, and must even make the best of it. For my own part, if I am to credit the quiet, unimpassioned assertion of the Duke of Argyle, who knew

human nature well, after the hey-day of mere blind love was over, I must believe myself not naturally given to change.

"Harriette," said Argyle, "is more steady in her attachments than almost any woman of her celebrity, so surrounded with flatterers, whom I have ever met with."

Of course, my fair readers would not have me guilty of such extreme ill-breeding as to differ in opinion from a noble duke! Nevertheless, I confess that I had only ceased to love one who was bound for life to another, and who had most cruelly trifled with my feelings, while he took a most unfair advantage of my youth, of my warmth of heart, and of my total lack of experience.

I now felt *le besoin d'aimer*, with almost the same ardour as when I used to follow the handsome stranger and his large dog, which induces me to believe that never did a fair lady die of love for one man, whilst others, equally amiable, were dying for her smiles.

In a fit of folly, I wrote a letter to Lord G. L. Gower, requesting him to come and meet me in the Regent's Park, at eleven o'clock on a Sunday-morning; at the same time assuring, him that desirous as I was, from all I had heard of his perfections, to make his acquaintance, yet, if he expected to please me, he must show me just as much respect, and humble deference, as though I had not ordered him up to Mary-le-bone-fields to be looked at.

Lord G. L. Gower's reply was:—

I do not usually answer such letters; but there is something so eccentric and uncommon in yours, that I cannot resist complying with your request; therefore you will find me at the appointed time and place.

G. L. Gower.

As the hour drew near for fulfilling my engagement in the Regent's Park, I recollected that I did not, in the least, know the person of Lord G. L. Gower, and felt much puzzled how I should contrive to distinguish him from any handsome man who might happen to be enjoying the fresh air towards Primrose Hill. However, trusting to chance, or sympathy, or that

instinct by which, according to Falstaff, the lion knows the true prince, I dressed myself with unusual care, and contrived to be punctual. I observed a tall, rather handsome, and gentlemanly man, looking about him; but as I felt at once that he was not, in any respect, cut out for the honour of filling up the void in my heart, I prayed the God of Love to send me a better subject.

However, there was nothing to be seen, at that early hour on Sunday morning, which in the least resembled a gentleman, or even, in their Sunday new coats and bran new yellow leather gloves, could be mistaken for one, that came within a mile of me.

This must be Leinster's Apollo, said I. How could I address myself to such a booby? True, this man may, perhaps, have a certain indescribable charm about him, a *je ne sais quoi*, which may not be discoverable at the first glance! I ventured to raise my eyes to his face, and, if I did not laugh, I looked as though I was thinking about it; and, on this, he spoke, and smiled, and blushed, and bowed.

I conceived that, having brought a man up to Mary-le-bone-fields on such a terribly hot morning, it would not have been fair, or lady-like, to have dismissed him, until I had given his talents and powers of pleasing a fair trial. I walked him up to the tip-top of Primrose Hill, and then towards Hampstead, and then back again to Great Portland-street.

At last His Lordship made a full stop, while he took off his hat to wipe his face, declaring he could go no farther, as he was quite unaccustomed to walking, and the sun was so very oppressive. He, therefore, entreated that I would permit him to accompany me, immediately, to my house, if only to sit down and rest, or otherwise he apprehended—fever or sudden death!

I assured him that I was sorry, very sorry, and hoped such fatal consequences would not follow our little rural bit of pleasure; at the same time I could only express my regrets, while I frankly declared to him that he was not, in the least, the sort of person I wanted.

Lord George L. Gower was too proud, too well-looking, to be deeply wounded at my determination, so he smiled, and bowed,

and wished me good morning, declaring himself much amused with the eccentricity and frankness of my character.

It will not do, I see, to lay one's self out for love, thought I, after His Lordship had left me. It comes, like money, when one is not thinking about it. Reading is a much more independent amusement than loving. Books one may cut, when one is tired of them; so I began immediately on arriving at home, with "Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's Letters". The style was very unequal, I thought; now paltry and ungraceful, now elevated. The same observations were applicable to the sentiments she expressed. In some letters one would accuse her of being both indecent and profligate; in others she displayed herself as the most refined, elegant and delicate of her sex. I read as far as this passage:—"Our vulgar notions that Mahomet did not own women to have any souls, is a mistake. It is true, he says they are not of so elevated a kind, and, therefore, must not hope to be admitted into the paradise appointed for the men, who are to be entertained by celestial beauties. But there is a place of happiness destined for souls of the inferior order, where all good women are to be, in eternal bliss. Any woman that dies unmarried, is looked upon to die in a state of reprobation. To confirm this, I believe they reason that the end of the creation of woman is to increase and multiply, and that she is only properly employed in the works of her calling, when she is bringing forth children, or taking care of them, which is all the virtue God expects from her.

I threw the book down at this passage, beginning to feel very much ashamed of myself: I rang my bell, and sent to my bookseller for the *History of Mahomet*, hoping that most prolific prophet would put me in the way of obeying his commands, in case, after duly studying his laws, I were disposed to turn Turk.

I seriously determined to choose my own religion, instead of following, blindly, that which happened to be my father's. If this determination be sinful, I must still think it ever has been, and ever will be the sin of all intelligent minds. The uneducated child, or the rudest clown who earns his hard fare by the

sweat of his brow, and whistles, as he returns home, for want of thought, will give the same answers, when you ask why they say their prayers, namely, because the parson says I ought: but can anyone, capable of thought and deep reflection, rest their hopes of eternal weal or woe on the promises of others? Will it not occur to them, that accident has had much to do with their being Christians, or Jews, or Turks? Will not they be aware of the force of early impressions, good or bad, and, if but to impress on their mind, the wisdom and justice, as well as the superiority of the religion they were born in, will they not compare it, steadily, with that of the greater part of the creation? It may be answered, that all religions are good, and we have but to act up to our belief of what is right, which is all that justice can require of us: yet will the ardent mind, while suffering under the various ills which flesh is heir to, be led to doubt and to search eagerly into the reason why a just God, who is our Father, has created us for so much misery?

I pondered a whole night on these expressive words of Lord Byron, in his "Childe Harold":

> Our life is a false nature, 'tis not in
> The harmony of things—this hard decree,
> This uneradicable taint of sin,
> This boundless Upas, this all blasting tree,
> Whose root is earth, whose leaves and branches
> The skies, which rain their plagues on me like dew,
> Disease, death, bondage—all the woes we see not, which
> throbs through
> The immedicable soul, with heart-aches ever new.
>
> Yet, let us ponder boldly—'tis a base
> Abandonment of reason, to resign
> Our right of thought—our last and only place
> Of refuge; this, at least, shall still be mine:
> Though, from our birth, the faculty divine
> Is charmed and tortured—cabin'd, cribb'd, confined,
> And bred in darkness, lest the truth should shine
> Too brightly, in the unprepared mind,
> The beam pours in, for time and skill will coach the blind.

However, all my time, and all my pondering, and all my skill, only confirmed me the more steadily in this opinion,—that I knew nothing about it.

I had long been, sentimentally, in love with Lord Byron, and, some years previous to the publication of the last canto of "Childe Harold", I had written to him to solicit the honour of his acquaintance.

If, my Lord, said I in my letter, *to have been cold and indifferent to every other modern poet, while I have passed whole nights in studying your productions, with the eagerness of one who has discovered a new source of enjoyment, as surprising as it was delightful, deserves gratitude from the vanity of an author, or the gallantry of a gentleman, you will honour me with a little of your friendship.*

Would you believe, reader, this eloquent epistle obtained me no answer during three long days? I was furious, and wrote again to tell him that he was a mere pedant; that my common sense was a match for his fine rhymes; that the best of us poor weak mortals, and I acknowledged him to be at the head of the list, must still be ignorant, subject to sickness, ill temper, and various errors in judgment, therefore was there little excuse for his impertinence, in presuming to find fault with the whole world, as he had done in his *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, at an age when his natural judgment could not be matured. It was vulgar, and showed the littleness which such want of philanthropy towards our poor fellow creatures always must evince. Was he really so superior, and would he crush the poor worms which dared not aspire to his perfections, or was he but a mere upstart man, of extraordinary genius, without strength of mind to know what he would be at? Could he not, at least, have declined the honour I wanted to confer on him, civilly?

This eloquent letter ended simply thus, after assuring him that it was now much too late to make my acquaintance, as I had changed my mind, and no longer desired it the least in the world—like the fox and the grapes—*You be hang'd!*

HARRIETTE WILSON.

This, to a favourite, was tolerably severe; but, when I take a liking to a person, I must and will be something to them; so, if they will not like me, I always make it my business and peculiar care, that they shall dislike, and quarrel with me. Let me once get them into a quarrel, and I am sure of them.

The next day I received the following answer from Lord Byron, dated Albany, Piccadilly.

If my silence has hurt "your pride or your feelings", to use your own expressions, I am very sorry for it; be assured that such effect was far from my intention. Business, and some little bustle attendant on changing my residence, prevented me from thanking you for your letter as soon as I ought to have done. If my thanks do not displease you, now, pray accept them. I could not feel otherwise than obliged by the desire of a stranger to make my acquaintance.

I am not unacquainted with your name or your beauty, and I have heard much of your talents; but I am not the person whom you would like, either as a lover or a friend. I did not, and do not suspect you, to use your own words once more, of any design of making love to me. I know myself well enough to acquit anyone who does not know me, and still more those who do, from any such intention. I am not of a nature to be loved, and so far, luckily for myself, I have no wish to be so. In saying this, I do not mean to affect any particular stoicism, and may possibly, at one time or other, have been liable to those follies, for which you sarcastically tell me, I have now no time: but these, and everything else, are to me, at present, objects of indifference; and this is a good deal to say, at six-and-twenty. You tell me that you wished to know me better, because you liked my writing. I think you must be aware that a writer is in general very different from his productions, and always disappoints those who expect to find in him qualities more agreeable than those of others; I shall certainly not be lessened in my vanity, as a scribbler, by the reflection that a work of mine has given you pleasure; and, to preserve the impression in its favour, I will not risk your good opinion, by inflicting my acquaintance upon you.

Very truly your obliged servant,

B.

This was very dry; but I had not aspired to Lord Byron's love, and I did not despair of making his acquaintance. I am indeed surprised that I never fell in love with His Lordship; but, certain it is, that, though I would have given anything to have been his most humble friend and servant, his beauty was of a nature never to inspire me with warmer sentiments.

There was nothing whatever voluptuous in the character of it; it was wholly intellectual: and, as such, I honoured it; but give me, for my lover, an indolent being, who, while he possesses talents and genius to do anything he pleases, pleases himself most and best in pleasing me! *Au reste*, I admire and look up to heroes! but indolent men make the best lovers.

I was a long while before I could convince Lord Byron that, as a lover, he would never have suited me, and really did not excite any passion in my breast; but, from the moment I had succeeded, His Lordship threw off all reserve, and wrote and spoke to me with the confidence of easy friendship and good-will, as though he had been delighted to find a woman capable of friendship, to whose vanity it was not at all necessary to administer by saying soft things to her.

On the Thursday which was to be big with the fate of Livius's farce, I took a party of friends to Mr. Elliston's private box. Drury-lane was crowded. Livius had at least eight people in the small box allotted to him by the manager. He payed me a flying visit, and seemed as much agitated as though he were about to be tried for high treason. I proposed changing boxes with him, to accommodate his friends. He was much delighted, and the exchange was made, much, I believe, to the annoyance of Mr. Elliston, though I knew not why it grieved him.

Livius's piece commenced almost as soon as we were quietly seated again. He was certainly much indebted to the exertions of all the very excellent performers who played in it, particularly Elliston and Harley. The piece went off with spirit. I never saw a poor man tremble as Livius did, during the first act. Who would write for the stage? thought I. Livius was all over the

house at once; both before and behind the scenes. He could not rest anywhere.

"Do sit down," said I, handing him a chair. "Let the public be hanged! What great crime would there be if your little piece happened not to be to their taste?"

"Oh, fancy," said Livius, "the agitation of coming thus before the public for the first time!"

"Fiddlestick!" said I.

He was now growing a little more tranquil, while Elliston was charming away his fears as well as the *ennui* of the audience. It was at that part where he expresses his rapture at the beauty and loveliness of his valet's wife, while the unfortunate husband, so well represented by Harley, stands in an agony behind his master's chair, not daring to acknowledge his marriage, for fear of losing his place.

The piece to be performed next was the Coronation. A man in the pit, at that moment when Elliston ought to have been most pathetic! mounted the boards, which were erected down the middle of the pit, I suppose to obtain a better view.

"You must not stand there, Sir!" vociferated Elliston to the man, in a loud angry voice, in the midst of his love-speech, to the utter dismay of poor Livius, who absolutely gasped for breath.

Sams, who was Livius's publisher, was in my box, and ventured to hiss, which example was followed by a faint vibration from the pit. The valet's wife looked rather silly at being thus cut by her admiring swain. Elliston came forward, as though ashamed of his impetuosity, and, gracefully bowing, addressed the audience something to this effect:

"As manager and proprietor of this theatre, I must request and desire that none of you, gentlemen, mount those boards"; and then, with all the impudence of the most perfect nonchalance, he turned round to his neglected fair one, and resumed his vows of love, from where he had left off.

"Elliston is very drunk," said poor Livius, looking as pale as a ghost with dread of what might follow.

"Not so very drunk yet, neither," said I, "since he has to play again, in the Coronation, to-night."

"Oh!" said Livius, shaking his head, mournfully, "Elliston always plays the king most naturally when he is most drunk."

"I have no doubt," answered I, "that Elliston plays his part best when he has been drinking, since he is always so excessively stupid and dull when sober. Except this trifling interruption, your little piece has gone off without a single accident or blunder, so be calm, man!"

Livius told me that he was about to bring out a young lady of infinite talent as a singer. "She is in my private box, and Elliston has promised to hear her best song from the pit, after the audience have left the house, to-night."

I asked if I might remain to hear her?

"Certainly," said Livius, "and, for that purpose, I will conduct you to a private pit-box. The young lady is to sing on the stage."

Livius's piece was announced for the next night, amidst loud plaudits.

We may guess that Livius naturally had a vast number of his own friends among the audience. It was, in fact, a very trifling production, and yet it was dramatic. However, I never heard of it, after it had run its allotted time, though I have seen many worse things last longer.

I thought that I too might, perhaps, find amusement in writing something, from the French, for the stage—so I, some days afterwards, fixed upon Molière's comedy of the "*Malade Imaginaire*," which I hastily transformed into an English three-act piece!

But I forgot to mention what became of Livius's protegée.

After the audience had left the theatre, Livius handed me downstairs to a pit-box, saying, "I must now leave you to attend my poor, timid, young friend." The lamps and candles were all extinguished, when Elliston threw himself along the benches in the pit. Soon afterwards, Livius came upon the stage, now lighted by a single lamp, conducting a very ill-

favoured young lady in a shawl. She began to sing very scientifically, but her voice was not pleasing. Study had done much for her, while nature had been a niggard.

Elliston appeared to be going to sleep, as soon as he had heard the first verse of a most barbarously long song; but, accidentally observing me, he climbed up to my box, from the pit, making a noise which altogether discouraged the poor young lady, by this rude inattention to her melody.

"Why do not you play harlequin?" said I.

"I am too old," he replied: and then asked me how the farce went off?

"Famously," I replied. "I see you know how to profit by my advice, and you made fewer faces. But you took a great liberty with the public, when you began scolding the audience, instead of minding what you were engaged in," I observed to him.

"What business had that man to stick himself up there?" Elliston asked.

"From sympathy! He was looking at a mountebank!"

During the whole of this time, the poor young lady was exerting herself, by the light of her solitary lamp, *à pure perte!*

"It is really unmanly," I observed, "to be so unfeelingly inattentive to a beginner, and one of the fair sex."

"Oh!" whispered Elliston, "Livius wants to father all his old sweethearts on me, I believe. I do not allude to this lady," said he, laughing, "it would be a libel on herself, and on mankind, to doubt her respectability; but then she cannot sing, and what is worse, he is going to bring me up three or four more next week."

Oh, *mon Dieu!* it has just occurred to me, that to have told this story of Elliston and Livius in due time, it ought not to have come in these eight years at soonest, and I must now go back with my memoirs; but what does it signify to my readers; the story will do as well, and amuse as much, in my second volume as in the last; and if this book meets due encouragement, I may write something afterwards with infinitely more regularity.

CHAPTER X

"It is all settled," said Fanny to me on the night before Mr. Dick's dinner-party, "and I am to be Mrs. Parker."

"I hope you will be happy," said I; "but I wish you were married."

"Why should poor Parker marry a woman with a ready-made family?" asked Fanny.

I declined offering an opinion, fearing to do harm.

Fanny was four years my senior, and possessed, perhaps, a larger portion of what is called common sense than myself. *Au reste*, the thing was settled between her and Parker, who were to proceed together to Portsmouth, where Colonel Parker's regiment was stationed, after they had passed a fortnight at Brighton.

"Suppose we make a party, and hire a house for you and Julia and me?"

"The very thing I wish," said Fanny; "for London is growing very stupid. We meet no one but the Honourable Colonel Collyer and Lord Petersham about the streets."

"Oh, yes!" said I; "we also see Lady Heathcote and Lady Windham."

"And that makes it worse still," added Fanny; "for I really believe, neither of those good ladies have missed Hyde-park or the opera one single night for the last twenty years, or changed the colour of their chariot blinds; Heathcote, rosy-red! and the gentle Ann's interesting yellow! How very tired I am of seeing these women!"

Julia called on me before Fanny had left, and our little excursion to Brighton was fixed for the following week.

When we had settled this important affair, my servant informed me that a lady requested to offer herself in the place of Miss Hawkes, my late *dame de compagnie*, who had just left me to be married to her cousin. I desired him to show her upstairs. She came tripping into the room with the step of a child. She wore short petticoats, and a small French bonnet stuck at the top of her head. I should imagine her age to have been about forty: indeed she owned to six and twenty.

"Who will recommend you, pray, madam?"

"The Countess Palmella, wife of the Portuguese Ambassador, in South Audley-street; I have been educating her children."

I asked if the countess's had been her first situation?

She replied in the affirmative.

"What were you doing before that, pray, ma'am?"

"Why," said the lady, with much affectation, "you see I was daily, nay hourly, expecting to get settled in life. I had a small property, and I went to Bath. Several of my friends had found charming husbands at Bath. However, time slipped away, madam, and, by some strange fatality or other, I exhausted my little resources, and did not manage to get settled in life: that is the truth of it."

It struck me that this curious woman, with the odd bonnet, would amuse me as well as any other lion, *pour le moment*, and, being acquainted with Amy's poor beau, the Count Palmella, I told her she might come to me the following day.

She seemed absolutely enraptured, as though mine had been an atmosphere which would rain men upon her, and our bargain was concluded. She was a straight, tall, long-backed lath of a woman, with a remarkably long face, small twinkling eyes, fine hair, and a bad skin, in spite of the white paint she used to beautify it. So much for Miss Eliza Higgins!!

The next evening found us all quite *rayonnante*, waiting for our dinner, in Mr. Dick's elegant drawing-room.

"We will certainly not wait for Mr. Ward," said Dick, looking at his watch.

"To be sure not, who the devil waits for men?" exclaimed Lord Alvanly.

There was a thundering rap at the door, and then entered the Honourable Mr. Ward, looking for all the world like a tobacconist. He was followed by his servant to the very door of the drawing-room. He hoped he had kept nobody waiting?

"To be sure not," said Alvanly, "who the devil would wait for you?"

"I would, all my life, and with all imaginable patience," I observed.

"Ha! ha!" said Ward, growing pale, while he affected to be amused.

"But, my excellent friend Dick," said Ward, "I must send back a note by my servant, who is waiting for it."

"Why," said Dick, "the servants are going to serve the dinner immediately, and I should rather prefer your going into my dressing room to write your note."

"I thank you," said Ward, with much asperity, "I thank you, all the same; but I prefer having the paper here, with your permission. With your permission mind, Dick! !"

"You may ring, if you please," said Dick, carelessly, and then, I believe, retired for the express purpose of desiring his footman not to answer the bell. This I only surmise, from his remarking to me, in an undertone, afterwards, that Ward gave more trouble than all the rest of the party put together, and he was delighted that the footman did not attend his summons.

Mr. Dick handed me down to dinner, Lord Hertford took care of Amy, Alvanly was ever Fanny's most obedient humble servant, and Ward held out his finger to Mrs. Armstrong, because Amy was better provided for. Luttrell, was, as usual, unless someone bored or offended him, the life and spirit of the whole party, when Ward would let him alone; but he was often interrupted by that learned gentleman's bawling, from the top to the bottom of a large table, his Latin *bons mots*, at which he himself, solus, laughed always most vociferously. He frequently

addressed himself to our favourite Luttrell, not being so sure of any other man's Greek and Latin.

"What a misfortune for you," said I to Luttrell, "that the little figure at the top of the table has faith in your classical knowledge"; and then, addressing myself to Ward, "Friend," said I, "we, at this end of the table, have all forgotten our Latin."

"Dick!" said Ward, whom I had put out of humour, "there would be no harm in ordering a few coals. I'm starved."

"Why, really," answered Dick, "the fire cannot be better, nor will that grate hold any more coals."

"That's your opinion, not mine"; and Ward affected to laugh, as though he had said something witty.

I praised the very unaffected character of Lord Robert Manners, to Nugent, who sat next to me.

"Ah!" squeaked out the reptile Ward, "stand up for Bob Manners, for I know he stands up for you."

"Is that meant for a joke, or a matter of fact?" asked I.

"Fact! fact. Bob, as your friend, no doubt stands up for you, whom he must so often hear abused."

"What? a mighty member of the senate, fighting me, a silly woman, with my own weapons, seriously, and in sober anger, as though I were one of the lords of the creation, and a commoner? Then, indeed, I must ask pardon of the honourable member, whom I must have sorely aggrieved. You say, my little spit-fire, that Lord Robert often hears me abused. All I answer is, look you at the breadth of his shoulders, before you presume to join the hue-and-cry against me in his presence. You would not like a horsepond, *n'est ce pas?*"

"Keep them to it, keep up the war between them; it is so amusing. Harriette is the only match for Ward I ever met with," whispered Luttrell, to my neighbour, his half brother, Nugent.

"Does anybody mean to go to Elliston's masquerade?" asked Dick.

"Certainly," said Mrs. Armstrong. "It is to be a most brilliant thing, and the stage will exhibit all the decorations of

Aladdin's Lamp, and I know not what besides: no dominoes, and a most comfortable, excellent supper."

"I dare not go," said Alvanly, "I am always afraid of getting into a row at these sort of places, and having to fight."

"*Apropos* of fighting," said I. "Your Lordship, if I remember, was formerly in the guards, I think? Why did you leave that regiment?"

"Why, I was afraid of being shot," said Alvanly, very quietly.

"But were you not also afraid of being called a coward?" I asked.

"I was in two engagements, and distinguished myself in each," Alvanly replied.

"How, pray?" said the stiff John Mills, of the Guards, who, though I believe he had served in Spain, with Alvanly, I did not think worth a place in my memoirs.

"I do not mean to say that I ever volunteered anything," said Alvanly, pulling up the collar of his shirt; "but, at the same time, I never ran away, you know. They did not reward me, for my services, as I expected. However, I am quite contented, to have retired on half pay.

"God bless your soul," continued His Lordship, addressing himself to me, "you have no idea what it is! Come on, my brave fellows. This is fine fun, my lads. You are obliged to find courage for yourself and your men too! I mentioned to two or three officers, at the time of action, that if it should please God to see me safe out of that, I would give the enemy leave to cut off my head, if I did not sell out of the army, or retire on half pay, the moment I arrived in England. The fact is, I have had the same antipathy to the idea of fighting, from a child, and I never should have gone into the Guards at all, if I had imagined they would have left London."

"Alvanly, shall I have the pleasure of drinking wine with you?" asked Lord Hertford, from the top of the table.

Alvanly assented of course.

"Madeira?" asked Dick, handing Alvanly the bottle.

"No; champagne, if you please. I can get Madeira at home," said Alvanly.

I do not recollect that any of us were very agreeable that night, though we talked a great deal. Hertford's subject was death, *pour encourager les autres*.

"Oh! it must be a dreadful tussle, at the last!" observed Alvanly, with such comical gravity of expression, as no pen could describe.

"Oh, Amy!" said Mrs. Armstrong as soon as we women entered the drawing-room, to which Mr. Dick conducted us himself. "Oh! Amy, my Tommy was so good and kind last night!"

"How do you mean?" cried Amy, abruptly.

"Guess," said Lucy.

"Very well, I do; but I cannot calculate the brave Colonel's forces."

"Oh! only once," Lucy answered.

"How absurd!" Amy remarked, turning towards the glass, and arranging her black locks.

Poor Julia scarcely spoke a single word the whole evening; indeed we had the greatest difficulty in persuading her to be of our party. She declared she could not endure to meet Amy, who had been making love to Mildmay, merely because Julia adored him. Mildmay had paid due attention to Amy's ogling, had basked in the sunshine of her smiles for nearly a fortnight, and then, just as she was growing tender, had cut her dead. Amy, seized with an unusual fit of frankness, shewed me Sir Henry's last letter, in which he begged to be excused coming to her, *pour le moment*: he was particularly engaged for the whole of the next week.

"*Mon Dieu! mon Dieu!*" said I, after reading this very impertinent letter, addressed to a fine woman who had done him too much honour. "How can you all encourage this cold-blooded heartless creature? Do pray let me write your answer directly, and you shall copy it. It will set poor Julia's mind at rest, and keep up, more or less, the dignity of the sex."

"I wish you would," answered Amy, "for I hate him! but, as to Julia, it's nonsense her sticking up for Mildmay, he only laughs at the idea."

Julia began to shed tears at Amy's coarse remarks, and I wrote as follows, which Amy copied, and delivered into my hands, to be forwarded to the gay baronet the next morning.

My Dear Sir Harry,

I have ten thousand apologies to make to you, for being the most careless creature on earth! Your letter of this morning was brought to me just as I was writing to that angel, Ponsonby; and, before I could read the first line of your effusion, my servant brought me two more notes; so, in my bustle and confusion, I am afraid yours must have been the piece of paper I took up to light my taper with; for, though I desired my maid to make strict search after it, before I went out, she informed me in the evening that it was not to be found. No matter, I give you credit for having said an infinity of soft things, and wish it were in my power "de vous rendre les pareilles". *Not but that I entertain a sincere esteem for you; to prove which, were I not about to leave town for Brighton, I should entreat you to continue your visits; but I am so unlucky as to have my time taken up entirely, just now. On my return I hope to be more fortunate, and if so, I shall certainly do myself the pleasure of sending you a card. In the meantime, Sir Harry will, I hope, believe me, like all the rest of my sex, deeply impressed with his merits, And most truly and faithfully*

His servant,

Amy Sydenham.

Julia recovered her spirits as soon as this letter was in my possession, signed and sealed, for she knew Mildmay too well to imagine he would forgive anyone who wounded his self-love.

"You will be surprised to hear that I have left your sister Sophia at home," said Julia.

We asked Julia about Lord Deerhurst, and she told us that Sophia felt herself so neglected, and uncomfortable, and dis-

gusted with her little lodging, that she had entreated Julia to take her as a boarder, and to which she had that morning consented.

Amy asked Julia why she did not bring Sophia with her?

"In the first place," answered Julia, "I have passed my word to your mother that Sophia shall not go out, except to walk with my own children; and in the second, she was not invited."

The gentlemen joined us soon afterwards.

The first thing Alvanly did, was to break one of Mr. Dick's looking-glasses, while playing some trick or other with a stick.

Dick grew sulky, and declared that since the honour of His Lordship's company was to be so expensive, he must decline it.

Alvanly said he was really sorry, but could not insult Mr. Dick by buying him another.

Dick assured him he was not touchy.

"Oh, yes," said Alvanly, "you will give yourself a good character, of course; but I shall not impose upon your goodness by doing anything half so rude."

As soon as we had taken our tea and coffee, we all went to the King's Theatre; but before Lord Hertford parted with us, he invited the females of this party to dinner.

We declared that we were going to Brighton, and had no time.

"Name your own day," said Lord Hertford; "to-morrow, if you please; but come you must."

"It shall be to-morrow, then," said Amy, replying for us all.

"What a fine thing it is to be an elder sister," said I. I thought Amy could never have recovered her temper.

Lord Hertford, before he left us, politely offered to send a carriage for my sisters.

I found the Duke of Leinster in my box.

"I am glad you have no men with you," said His Grace, with something like agitation of manner; "for I want to speak to you. Do you know, my friend, of whom I spoke to you, is come up from Oxford on purpose to try to get introduced! I know he must return to college to-night, and I am, I confess, rather anxious that he should be disappointed."

"Nonsense," said Julia. "Who is it, pray?"

"The Marquis of Worcester," replied His Grace.

"Is he handsome?" I inquired.

"Not a bit of it," said the Duke.

"What is he like?" Fanny asked.

"I do not know anybody he is like, upon my honour, unless it be his father. He is a long, thin, pale fellow, with straight hair."

"You need not be alarmed," said I; "I shall not be presented to your friend, if I can help it. I always tell everybody I know not to bring men here, without first coming up to ask my permission."

"I know you do," said Leinster; "since this is the answer Lord Worcester has received from several of your friends, to whom he has applied."

"There he is!" continued Leinster, leaning towards the pit. "Do not you observe a very tall young fellow, in silk stockings, looking steadfastly up at this box. Upon my honour, he won't wear trousers or curl his hair, because he heard that you dislike it."

"It is very flattering," said I, eagerly looking out for him with my opera glass, an example which was followed by Julia and Fanny.

The young marquis was, at that time, too bashful to stand the artillery of three pair of fine eyes at once, and turned away from our eager gaze! but not till I had satisfied myself that he would not do for me one bit better than his uncle, Lord G. L. Gower, and, in the next five minutes, I had forgotten his existence.

Lord Frederic Bentinck now came and asked me when I meant to keep my promise of accompanying him to Vauxhall?

"Oh, we shall never get to Brighton," said Fanny, who doted on donkey-riding. "Harriette will keep us in town all the summer, as she did last year."

"Summer!" interposed George Brummell, entering in a furred greatcoat. "You do not mistake this for summer, do you? A little more of your summer will just finish me," pulling up his fur collar.

"Upon my honour, I think it very hot," said Leinster. "It must be hot, you know, because it is August."

"I never know the difference, for my part," Fred Bentinck observed. "The only thing that ever makes me cold, is putting on a greatcoat; but then I have always a great deal to do, and that keeps me warm. Once for all, madam, will you go to Vauxhall on Monday night? If you will, I will put off my sister, and accompany you."

I assented, in spite of everything Fanny and Julia could say to prevent me; for Fred Bentinck always made me merry.

"What is Lord Molyneux doing with Mrs. Fitzroy Stanhope?" said I, looking towards that lady's box, where she sat *tête à tête* with His Lordship.

"How fond you are of scandal!" observed Fred Bentinck.

"Oh! Lord, no," answered I, "on the contrary, I admire her taste. Who would not cut the very best swaggering Stanhope for a Molyneux?"

"Where do you expect to go to, Harriette?" said Bentinck, for at least the twentieth time since I had known him.

"To Amy's to-night, to Lord Hertford's to-morrow, and to Vauxhall on Monday," I replied.

"And then to Brighton, I hope," continued Fanny.

"We must see Elliston's masquerade first," said I.

"A very respectable exhibition, indeed," observed Bentinck.

"Oh! I never unmask, and nobody will find me out; but I've a natural turn for masquerading, and go I must."

King Allen put his long nose into the box, and his nose only. "Is Amy at home to-night?"

Fanny answered in the affirmative; adding, "But she is in her own box. Why do not you go to her to inquire?"

"Lord Lowther and some nasty Russians are with her," answered Allen.

"*A ce soir*, then," I said, kissing my hand to him, which was as much as to say, "Do not come in". He was kind enough to understand my hint.

Lord Molyneux shortly took his seat by my side, and I rated him about Mrs. Fitzroy.

"Remember Monday," said Fred Bentinck, as he left the box to make room for Mr. Napier and Colonel Parker, followed by the young Lord William Russell.

Lord Molyneux seemed to take pleasure in chatting with me, without desiring a nearer intimacy; and I was always very glad to see and laugh with His Lordship. When he left me, Lord William began to whisper and stammer out something about the folly he was guilty of, in coming to me, as he did, and encouraging hopes which he knew would end in disappointment.

"You do not know any such thing," returned I.

"What have I," continued Lord William, "to recommend myself to your notice? A poor little wretch, without either fortune or wit."

I told him that he was well-looking, high-bred, and high-born. I felt really desirous to encourage the most humble little gentleman-like being I ever met with.

Just as Parker and Napier had left the box, Lord Deerhurst entered it, accompanied by a tall young man, and Lord William then took his leave, from the mere dread of intruding. "I do not often introduce gentlemen to ladies," said His Lordship, "and perhaps I am taking a liberty now; yet I hope you can have no objection to my making you known to the Marquis of Worcester."

I bowed rather formally; because I had before desired Deerhurst not to bring people to me without my permission. However, the young Marquis blushed so deeply, and looked so humble, that it was impossible to treat him within civility; but, having taken one good look at my conquest, and thus convinced myself that I should never love him, I conversed indifferently, on common subjects, as people do who happen to meet in a stage coach, where time present is all they have to care about. Deerhurst was lively and pleasant; the Marquis scarcely spoke; but the little he did find courage to utter was certainly said with good taste, and in a gentlemanly manner.

Leinster was infinitely bored and annoyed, though he tried to conceal it.

"What do you think of him?" asked Leinster, whispering in my ear.

"I will tell you to-morrow," I replied; and, the better to enable myself to do this, I examined the person of the young Marquis for the second time. It promised to be very good, and his air and manners were distinguished; but he was extremely pale, and rather thin; nevertheless, there was something fine and good about his countenance, though he was certainly not handsome.

Deerhurst invited the Duke of Leinster to go into the pit with him.

Leinster hesitated.

I understood him. "Do not be afraid," said I in his ear. "Of course, having already engaged you to take me to my carriage, I shall neither change my mind, nor break my word."

Leinster gratefully grasped my hand; but fixed his eyes on Worcester, still hesitating. Not that it was in His Grace's nature to break his ducal heart for any woman, and still less, perhaps, for me; but a man's school-fellow pushing himself forwards, and trying to cut him out, where he had formed high expectations, is always a bore, even to the coldest man alive.

"Of course my sister Amy will be happy to see Lord Worcester to-night," said I, aloud, in answer to what I read in Leinster's countenance.

Lord Worcester bowed, and looked rather more confused than pleased.

"Do come, my Lord," said Fanny, who liked what she had seen of His Lordship, extremely.

To Leinster's joy, and our astonishment, Lord Worcester said, he must really decline my very polite offer, grateful as he felt for it.

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Deerhurst. "What a very odd fellow you are! I really cannot make you out. I give you my honour, Harriette," continued His Lordship, "that, not an hour ago, he declared he would give half his existence to sit near you,

and talk to you for an hour; and now you invite him to pass the evening in your society, he appears to be frightened to death at the idea!"

"You are all alike; a set of cruel wicked deceivers," said I, carelessly; being really indifferent as to the impression it made on Lord Worcester, who, in his eagerness to exculpate himself from this charge of caprice, blushed deeply, and evinced considerable agitation.

"No, indeed, I beg, I do entreat that you will not, you must not imagine this. I have a particular reason for not going to your sister's; but it would be impertinent in a stranger, like me, to take up your time by an explanation: only pray acquit me. Do not send me away so very unhappy; for, you must know, I am sure you must, that the indifference of which you accuse me would be impossible, quite impossible, to any man."

"What is the matter with you, young gentleman?" said I, looking at him with much curiosity, "and why do you lay such a stress on trifles light as air?"

"To you, perhaps," observed Worcester, trying to laugh from a fear of seeming ridiculous.

"There is a pretty, race-horse little head for you!" said Deerhurst, touching my hair.

"I never saw such beautiful hair," Worcester remarked timidly.

"Put your fingers into it," said Deerhurst. "Harriette does not mind how you tumble her hair about."

"I should richly deserve to be turned out of the box, were I to do anything so very impertinent," interrupted His Lordship.

"Oh, no," said I, leaning the back of my little head towards Worcester, "anybody may pull my hair about. I like it, and I am no prude."

Worcester ventured to touch my hair, in fear and trembling, and the touch seemed to affect him like electricity. Without vanity, and in very truth, let him deny it if he can, I never saw a boy, or a man, more madly, wildly, and romantically in love with any daughter of Eve, in my whole life.

"Come with me," said Deerhurst to Leinster.

"Remember your promise," Leinster whispered to me as he unwillingly followed His Lordship.

"May I," said Lord Worcester eagerly, as though he dreaded an interruption, "may I, on my return to town, venture to pay my respects?"

"Certainly," answered I, "if I am in town; but we are going to Brighton."

True love is ever thus respectful, and fearful to offend. Worcester, with much modesty, conversed on subjects unconnected with himself or his desires, apparently taking deep interest in my health, which, I assured him, had long been very delicate.

Just before the curtain dropped, Worcester seemed again eager to say something on his refusal to accompany me to Amy's.

"Leinster is coming to take you to your carriage, I know," said he, "and I wish——"

"What do you wish?"

"That you would permit me to explain something to you, and promise not to call me a conceited coxcomb."

"Yes! I'll answer for her," said Fanny, "so out with it, my Lord. Why be afraid of that great black-eyed sister of mine, as if she were of so much consequence?"

"Well then," continued Worcester, blushing deeply, "Lord Deerhurst told me that your sister treated you unkindly, and that you never allowed your favourites to visit her. Upon my honour, I would rather never see you again, than pay my court to anybody who has behaved ill to you."

Before I could reply, Leinster came hurrying and bustling into the box, as the curtain dropped.

"You return to Oxford to-night, I believe?" said His Grace to Worcester, who replied that he must start at six in the morning.

I advised him to take a few hours rest first.

"That will be quite impossible," Worcester answered, in a low voice.

The young Marquis's pale face certainly did grow paler, as he looked wistfully after Leinster, whose arm I had taken.

First love is all powerful, in the head and heart of such an ardent character as Worcester's; and there really was an air of truth about him which not a little affected me, for the moment; therefore, turning back to address him, after I had drawn my arm away from Leinster:—"Perhaps," said I, in a low, laughing voice, "perhaps, Lord Worcester, it may be vain and silly in me to believe that you are disposed to like me; but, as I do almost fancy so, I come to wish you a good night, and to assure you that I shall remember your taking up my quarrels, against my unkind sister, with the gratitude I always feel towards those who are charitable enough to think favourably of me."

Worcester began to look too happy.

"But do not mistake me," I continued, "for I am not one bit in love with you."

Worcester looked humble again.

"In fact," said I, laughing, "my love-days are over. I have loved nothing lately."

"Not the Duke of Leinster?" inquired His Lordship, whose anxiety to ascertain this had overcome his fears of seeming impertinent.

"No, indeed," I rejoined, and Worcester's countenance brightened till he became almost handsome.

Leinster approached us, with a look of extreme impatience.

"Good night, my Lord," said I, waving my hand, as I joined His Grace. Worcester bowed low, and hastened out of sight.

"If Leinster were not my friend," said Worcester to a gentleman, who afterwards repeated it to me, pointing to Leinster and myself as we stood in the round room, waiting for His Grace's carriage—"if that young man were not my friend, I would make him walk over my dead body, before he should take Harriette out of this house."

Oh, this love! ! this love! !

Amy's rooms were not full. It was her last party for that season. There was nobody in town, so *faute de mieux*, since

Mildmay had cut her, she was making up to a Mr. Boultby, a black little ugly dragoon, whom she declared was exactly to her taste.

"Come to Brighton," said Amy to her hero.

He assured her that, if his regiment had not been stationed there, he would have joined her, since he felt that he could not live out of her smiles.

"How can you strive to make fools of people?" said I.

"What do you mean?" inquired Amy, fiercely.

"Why, seriously, Mr. Boultby," continued I, "take my word, she has no fancy for you."

Mr. Boultby's vanity would not permit him to take my word, so I left him to the enjoyment of it.

Parker and Fanny appeared to be very happy together, and sincerely attached to each other. No husband could shew more respect towards any wife.

Leinster was very dull, though too proud to complain.

"Confess," said I to His Grace, as soon as I could get him into one corner of the room, "confess that you are annoyed and unhappy, about Lord Worcester."

"I do think," said Leinster, "though I do not pretend to have any claim on you whatever, that Worcester, as my friend, had no right to intrude himself into your society to-night."

"Never mind, don't bore me with your jealousy, I abhor it," said I, "I must and will be free, as free as the air, to do whatever I like. I always told you so, and never professed to be in love with you. However, I still like you, as well as I like anybody else; and, as to Lord Worcester, what shall I see of him, while he is at Oxford, and I at Brighton, to which place I did not invite him?"

"I do not see why Worcester thought proper to blush, as he did to-night, and pretend to be so over modest, while he was doing such a cool, impudent thing," muttered Leinster.

"Dear me, how tiresome," said I, yawning. "I should almost have forgotten all about Lord Worcester, by this time, if you had made yourself agreeable."

The evening finished heavily for me. I was bored with Leinster, who never had anything on earth to recommend him to my notice, save that excellent temper, which I now saw ruffled for the first time since I had known him: and Amy, who, it must be acknowledged, was in the habit of saying droll things, was this night wholly taken up and amused with that stupid, ugly, Boultby! I therefore returned early, and Leinster put me down at my own door.

The next day I proposed to my new *dame de compagnie*, Miss Eliza Higgins, to dress herself quickly in order to accompany me into the park.

"How do you do? how do you do?" said Lord Fife, as he joined us near Cumberland Gate. "Who is your friend?" he continued, appearing to eye Miss Higgins with looks of admiration, much to my astonishment. "Am I not to be introduced to your friend?"

"*Et pourquoi pas?*" said I, naming Miss Higgins, with whom he conversed as though her acquaintance had been the thing on earth most devoutly to be wished.

"What a funny little bonnet you have got on!" said His Lordship to my companion, interrupting himself in the middle of a long story from the North.

After Lord Fife had left us, Miss Eliza Higgins could speak of nothing else.

"Charming man, ma'am, the Earl of Fife! I have heard much of him; but never had the honour to be presented to him before. That is a man, now, a poor weak female would find it very difficult to resist. His Lordship is so condescending! so polite!"

When we were tired of walking in the park, I drove to the house of a married sister of mine, whose name we will call Paragon, since she was the very paragon of mothers, having drawn up a new patent system of education for her children, better than Jean Jacques Rousseau's, and unlike everybody's else.

Her family consists of two boys and two girls. The eldest

daughter was then nearly seven years of age: her son and heir had scarcely attained his fifth year. "They shall never go to school," said my sister Paragon, "nor will I suffer them to be left, one instant, to the care of nurses or servants, to learn bad grammar and worse morals. Neither shall they be told of such things as thieves or murderers; much less shall they hear anything about falsehood and deceit. They shall never obtain what they want by tears, nor rudeness, after the age of two; and it shall depend on the politeness and humility of their deportment, whether they have any dinner or not; and nothing shall be called indecent, which is natural, either in words or deeds. So much for the minds of my children; and, with regard to their bodily health, I shall make them swallow one of Anderson's Scots Aperient Pills every night of their blessed lives! *et iln'y aura rien à craindre!*"

Sister Paragon was very pretty. She had the sweetest, most lovely eyes I ever beheld; and not because they were large, or of the finest hazel colour; I allude to their character and expression; now flashing with indignation, now soft, and yet so bright that one might almost see one's own reflected in them. Paragon's little nose, too, was very pretty, even when red and frost-bitten; and she had a beautiful mole on her clear brown cheek. She did not at all resemble either a paragon or a prude; and yet I am the only one of all our family who am not afraid of her wit or her virtue. She married a gentleman of good family and connexions, though poor; and, when she did this, she almost broke the tender heart of the Reverend Orange patriot, Sir Harcourt Lees, baronet, of Irish notoriety, who had often proposed to her, on his knees, and on his——seat, and with his whole heart! "He was a good little fellow," Paragon would often say, "but his face was so like a knocker!!"

C'est bien dommage!

Paragon's husband was not in London when I called on her. She was sitting, with four of the most lovely children I ever beheld at one time. Her eldest daughter was almost as beautiful as our mother, whose equal I never saw, nor shall see on earth.

She had her mother's eye, her grandmother's nose, and her nice little Aunt Harriette's curly brown hair. Then she was so graceful, and spoke such good French!

"Mary!" said Paragon to her daughter, as soon as she had shaken hands with me and inquired after my health, "Mary, come away from the window, directly. Fie! for shame! Do not you see those two men, at the corner of the street, are tipsy? Is that a proper sight to attract a young lady's attention?"

Little Mary was in high spirits. She talked of love! and said she knew, very well, that everybody fell in love, and that she was in love, too, herself.

"With whom, pray?" asked Paragon.

"With my brother John," answered little Mary; and next she asked her mother when she might marry him, declaring that she could not wait much longer.

"To bed! to bed!" said mamma. "You must all go to bed directly."

"Already?" I asked. "Why, it is not six o'clock yet."

"No matter. I am tired to death of them, and they are always asleep before seven."

In less than five minutes, the children were all running about stark naked, as they were born, laughing, romping, and playing with each other. Little Sophia, who was not yet two years of age, did nothing but run after her beautiful brother Henry, a dear little laughing boy, who was about to celebrate his fourth birthday. Little Sophia, bred in the school of nature, handled her brother rather oddly, I thought.

"Surely it is Nature's own sweet work!" said Paragon.

"Mamma! mamma!" called out little Henry.

"What is the matter, my love?" said Paragon.

"Is Sophy to have my did—dle to keep?"

"No, my love," answered mamma with calm dignity, "not to keep, only to play with!"

A fight now took place between Sophia and Henry; because the latter defended his manhood with the most resolute vigour. Paragon, at this crisis, produced a little white rod, the sight of

which caused not only an instantaneous cessation of hostilities between the high contending parties, but a dead pause in the assembly! And, at the word of command, these beautiful little creatures kneeled down, and prayed that God would make them good, and bless their papa and mamma, and everybody belonging to them, and all mankind. Paragon then put them to bed, gave them a Scotchman in the shape of a pill, and all was still as the grave!

"Good-night, my dear Paragon," said I. "Lord Hertford dines at eight, and I shall not be ready."

"I saw you at the opera last night," Paragon remarked, "and truly it was an unfair monopoly, to keep two such fine young men as Lord Worcester and the Duke of Leinster to yourself. I admire the latter, of all things, so you may send Leinster to me, if you prefer Lord Worcester."

"How wicked!" said I. "If ever you, with such a beautiful young family, were to go astray, you must despair of forgiveness."

"Very fine talking," answered Paragon. "So you would score off your own sins by a little cut-and-dried advice, which costs you nothing."

Her son and heir interrupted her, at this moment, by such hard breathing, as almost amounted to a snore.

"That boy has caught cold!" observed mamma, and she awoke him to administer an extra Scotchman!

"Good-bye, good-bye," said I, running downstairs; and, when I got home, I had only ten minutes left *pour faire ma toilette*. As to Miss Eliza Higgins, Lord Fife's compliments had so subdued her, that she could not afford me the least assistance.

"A charming man! the Earl of Fife!" she was repeating for at least the fiftieth time, when a note was put into my hand, bearing the noble earl's arms, and my footman, at that moment, informed me that my carriage was at the door.

"Any answer for Lord Fife, ma'am?" asked my servant.

I hastily read the note, which contained His Lordship's request to pass the evening with me and my lovely companion. I did not show this to Miss Higgins on that occasion, because it

seemed so very *outré* and unhoped for, that I feared it might, from the mere surprise, have caused sudden death.

"My compliments only," said I, "tell His Lordship I am very sorry, but I cannot write, because I am this instant getting into my carriage to dine with Lord Hertford": and so saying, I followed my servant downstairs.

Lord Hertford had not invited one person to meet us; but his excellent dinner, good wine, and very intelligent conversation, kept us alive, till a very late hour. I mean no compliment to Lord Hertford; for he has acted very rudely to me, of late; but he is a man possessing more general knowledge than anyone I know. His Lordship appears to be *au fait* on every subject one can possibly imagine. Talk to him of drawing, or horse riding; painting or cock-fighting; rhyming, cooking or fencing; profligacy or morals; religion of whatever creed; languages living or dead; claret, or burgundy; champagne or black strap; furnishing houses, or riding hobbies; the flavour of venison, or breeding poll-parrots; and you might swear that he had served his apprenticeship to every one of them.

After dinner, he shewed us miniatures, by the most celebrated artists, of at least half a hundred lovely women, black, brown, fair, and even carrotty, for the amateur's sympathetic *bonne bouche*. These were all beautifully executed; and no one, with any knowledge of painting, could hear him expatiate on their various merits, without feeling that he was qualified to preside at the Royal Academy itself! The light, the shade, the harmony of colours, the vice of English painters, the striking characters of Dutch artists—*Ma foi!* No such thing as foisting sham Vandykes, or copies from Rubens, on Lord Hertford, as I believe is done, or as I am sure might be done, on the Duke of Devonshire: and yet His Grace, I rather fancy, must be in the habit of sending advertisements to the newspapers, relative to his taste in *virtû*, and love of the arts. If not, how comes it that everybody hears of Devonshire's pictures of his own choosing, while Lord Hertford's most correct judgment never graces those diurnal columns. His Lordship does not buy them either by

so much a hundred, or so much a foot; but, if the town did not talk about Devonshire's pictures, Devonshire's fortune, and Devonshire's parties, he would be a blank in the creation. Once, indeed, he was slandered with bastardy; but that passed off quietly, as it ought to do; for who would have made it their pastime to beget such a lump of unintelligible matter, when they were not legally bound to perform such mere sluggish duty as engenders base animal life, without soul! Though surely that's enough for a duke, were it even a Wellington. Not that a man is to blame for being stupid, be he duke or tinker; but then Devonshire is so incorrigibly affected, and stingy with all! I remember his calling on me, and pretending to make love to me; and, with an air of condescension and protection, asking me, in what he could serve me? For my part, I am always inclined to judge of others by my own heart; I therefore took him at his word, believing that a man of such a princely fortune would not, unasked, proffer his services to anybody to whom he was not disposed to send a few hundreds when they should require it. Being, some time afterwards, in such a predicament, and, having promised to apply to him, I sent to him for a hundred guineas. His Grace begged to be excused sending so large a sum!! at the same time assuring me that a part of it was at my service.

Oh! what a fine thing is the patronage of mighty dukes!

Apropos. I must not be ungrateful. The most noble, I ought to say the most gracious, the Duke of Devonshire, once sent me two presents! The one, in a parcel, wrapped up in fine paper, and sealed with the Devonshire arms.

"A parcel, madam!" said my footman, "and the Duke of Devonshire's servant waits, while you acknowledge the receipt of it."

The parcel contained a very ugly old red pocket handkerchief!! His Grace, in the note which accompanied this most magnificent donation, acknowledged that it was hideous; but then, he assured me, it was the self same which he had worn on his breast, when he made it serve for an under waistcoat, on the occasion of his visit to me the day before. This however was

not all. In the warmth of his heart he sent me a ring too! I think it must have been bought at Lord Deerhurst's jewellers, and yet perhaps it was gold, instead of brass: but such a mere wire, that it could not weigh a shilling's worth. Still, had it been of brass, and the gift of a friend who loved me, I should have worn it as long as it had lasted; but, being that of the Duke of Devonshire, who cared nothing about me, I sent it him back, to punish his vanity in supposing that trifles light as air could be prized by me, because they came from him. As to his ugly old red pocket handkerchief, I gave it to my footman, and told the donor that I had done so.

Devonshire is a good man too! at least, so the world says: and I know he goes to church on a Sunday; but what right had he to visit a woman like me, who, without vanity or professing to be anything particular, have certainly more wit in my little finger than is contained in his whole body, unless he were inclined to treat me with the attention and respect which I have been in the habit of receiving from his dearest relations, and everybody else!

But to proceed.—

Lord Hertford showed us a vast collection of gold and silver coins, portraits, drawings, curious snuff boxes and watches. He had long been desirous that Amy, Fanny, and myself, should sit to Lawrence, for a large family-picture, to be placed in his collection.

Though the tea and coffee, like our dinner, were exquisite, Hertford made a good-natured complaint to his French commander-in-chief, about the cream.

"Really," said His Lordship, addressing us in English, "for a man who keeps a cow, it is a shame to be served with such bad cream!"

"I knew not," said I, "that you were the man who kept a cow. Pray where is she?"

"In Hyde Park," he replied, "just opposite my windows."

Lord Hertford then proposed to show us a small detached building, which he had taken pains to fit up, in a very luxurious

style of elegance. A small, low gate, of which he always kept the key, opened into Park Lane, and a little narrow flight of stairs, covered with crimson cloth, conducted to this retirement. It consisted of a dressing-room, a small sitting-room, and a bedchamber. Over the elegant French bed was a fine picture of a sleeping Venus. There were a great many other pictures, and their subjects, though certainly warm and voluptuous, were yet too classical and graceful to merit the appellation of indecent. He directed our attention to the convenience of opening the door, himself, to any fair lady who would honour him with a visit incognita, after his servants should have prepared a most delicious supper and retired to rest. He told us many curious anecdotes of the advantage he derived from his character for discretion.

I never tell of any woman. No power on earth should induce me to name a single female, worthy to be called woman, by whom I have been favoured. In the first place, because I am not tired of variety, and wish to succeed again: in the second, I think it dishonourable."

He told us a story of a lady of family, well known in the fashionable world, whose intrigue with a young dragoon he had discovered by the merest and most unlooked-for accident. "I accused her of the fact," continued His Lordship, "and refused to promise secrecy till she had made me as happy as she had made the young dragoon."

"Was this honourable?" I asked.

"Perhaps not," said Hertford; "but I could not help it."

We did not leave Lord Hertford till near two o'clock, when he kindly set us all down, himself, in his own carriage.

CHAPTER XI

THE next morning, before I had finished my breakfast, a great big stupid Irishman was announced, by name Dominick Brown, with whom I had a slight acquaintance. He brought with him, for the purpose of being presented to me, the Marquis of Sligo. They sat, talking on indifferent subjects, for about an hour, and then drove off in His Lordship's curricle. Next came a note from Lord Fife, requesting permission to drink tea with me and my charming friend. Who would have thought it? said I to myself, laughing. Here am I playing second fiddle to Miss Eliza Higgins! for the amusement of her most charming man, the Earl of Fife. I wrote, on the back of his note,

Going to Vauxhall; but you may come to-morrow evening at nine.

I thought that Miss Eliza Higgins would have fainted when I told her that Lord Fife was coming to us.

"Oh dear, ma'am, what would you advise me to wear? If you would not think it a liberty, and would lend me the pattern of your sweet blue cap, I would sit up all night to complete one like it."

"All this energy about drinking tea with a rake of a Scotchman—who you know would not marry an angel,—and pretend to tell me that you are *une grande vertu*?" said I.

"Certainly," answered Miss Eliza Higgins, reddening.

"Fiddlestick!" was my sublime ejaculation.

Miss Eliza Higgins burst into tears.

"Nay," I continued, "this fit of heroics to me is ridiculous. I ask nothing of you but plain dealing. The fact is this, I am not curious but frank. Lord Fife wants to make your acquaintance, and it is not my wish to spoil any woman's preferment in

whatever line of life, whether good or bad: so, guessing from all the raptures you have expressed at the idea of this rake's attachment, that the governess of the young Countess Palmella is no better than she should be, I have agreed to receive His Lordship; but, since these tears of virtuous indignation have convinced me of the injustice I did you, heavens forbid that I should be the means of bringing Lord Fife and a vestal together, for fear of consequences!" I then quietly opened my writing-desk, and began framing an excuse to His Lordship.

"Surely you are not putting off the Earl of Fife?" said Miss Eliza Higgins, in breathless agitation.

"I think it wrong to introduce such a gay man to an innocent woman," was my answer.

Miss Higgins entreated and begged in vain.

"Well, then," said Miss Higgins, "I confess that once——"

"Once what?" I asked.

"I had a slip—a—yes—a slip!" and she held her handkerchief to her eyes.

"What do you call a slip? do you mean a petticoat, or an intrigue?"

"Oh, fie! fie!" said Miss Eliza Higgins. "Intrigue is such a shocking word, and conveys a more determined idea of loose morals, than a mere accidental slip."

I still persisted in sending the excuse, declaring that, since hers had been only an accidental slip, she might recover it.

"Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" said Miss Higgins, as my hand was extended to the bell, "what poor weak creatures we are! I quite forgot the general!"

"General who?"

"Why, General——but you will be secret?"

"As the grave, of course."

"Did you ever hear of General Mackenzie?" said Miss Eliza Higgins, spreading her hand across her forehead.

"He was Fred Lamb's general in Yorkshire," I answered.

"The same, madam, a fascinating man! and this is my excuse."

"True," said I, "and I remember all the servant maids, and Yorkshire milkwomen confessed his power."

"Most true!" said Miss Eliza Higgins, with a deep sigh.

"What, then, you have forgotten the Earl of Fife already?"

"Oh, His Lordship is quite another thing," said Miss Higgins, brightening.

"And another thing is what you wish for?"

"Oh, fie, ma'am! indeed you are too severe. These little accidents do, and must happen, from mere inexperience, and the weakness of our nature. I know several women, who have made most excellent wives, after a slip or two, which, I assure you, madam, often serves to fortify our virtue afterwards."

"Well, then," said I, resuming my pen, "lest the gay Lord Fife should break through the formidable bulwark of virtue, which has been already fortified by two intrigues, I shall most positively send him an excuse."

"I entreat, I implore, ma'am, do not refuse my first request. Who knows what may turn up?" In short, never was Brougham himself more eloquent! Not even on that memorable day, when he was employed by Lord Charles Bentinck, to show just cause why Lady Abdy ought to have cuckolded Sir William, as she did. She, ultimately, prevailed; and all-conquering Fife was expected with rapture.

Before dinner, I went to call on Julia, by whom I had been sent for. Extreme anxiety had brought on a *fausse couche*; but Julia, being as well as could be expected, hoped still to be able to join us at Brighton, if not to accompany us there. My sister Sophia was sitting by her bedside, looking very pretty, and much happier than when she was with Lord Deerhurst.

Fanny called on Julia, whose house she had changed for one in Hertford-street, Mayfair, on her acquaintance with Colonel Parker, whose name, at his particular request, she had now taken.

"My dear Fanny," said I, "what am I to do with your boy, George? We shall never make a scholar of him, and he declares that he will not be a sailor."

"Flog him! Flog him!" said Amy, who overheard what I was saying, as she entered the room, accompanied by a man in powder. "I flog my boy, Campbell, every hour in the day." I never saw such a man in all my life as her powdered swain. "I too am for flogging," said he, "since such as you see me, here, before you, I am become by mere dint of birch!"

"*Dieu nous en préserve!*" said I, hurrying into my carriage. Having reached home too early for dinner, I sat down to consider the plan of a book, in the style of the *Spectator*, a kind of pic-nic, where every wiseacre might contribute his mite of knowledge, at so much a head, provided he and she would sign their real names to the paper.

Having imagined myself to be a wild lad, like my young scamp of a nephew, addressing a second "Rambler" or "Spectator", whom I ventured to name "Momus", I wrote as follows:—

"Mr. Momus,

"I am one of those unfortunate victims, whose hard fate was decided before I was born, and *bon gré, mal gré*, I must become a prodigy of learning. Now, Mr. Momus, I have to inform you that, notwithstanding I love my parents above all the world, yet I abhor and detest everything in the way of study. Floggings, rewards, private tutors and public schools, have all been tried in vain; and though I am, at fifteen, becoming somewhat hardened against my father's harsh sarcasms on my stupidity, yet fain would I exert myself to dry up the tears my poor mother often sheds, for the disappointment of her sanguine wishes on my account; but for the strong conviction I feel, that it is as impossible to acquire a taste for study, as to benefit by a forced application to books.

"Learn, oh youth, says Zimmerman, one of my tutor's favourite authors, learn, oh young man! that nothing will so easily subdue your passion for pleasure as an increasing emulation in great and virtuous actions, a hatred to idleness and frivolity, the study of the sciences, and that high and dignified

spirit which looks with disdain on everything that is vile and contemptible.

"All very fine, old boy, and clear as the nose on your face. A hatred of idleness, Mr. Zimmerman, is a love of industry; but how is this love and hatred to be acquired? 'Voila,' said a French matron to Monsieur le Duc de ——, at Paris, throwing open the doors of an elegant apartment, 'Voila la chambre ou l'on . . . "Mais, ou est la chambre ou l'on . . . ?" said the Duke.

"'Try solitude, says Zimmerman——

"My father has tried that too, and it failed; but then, Zimmerman continues, for solitude to produce these happy effects it is not sufficient to be continually gazing out of a window, with a vacant mind, nor gravely walking up and down your study, in a ragged *robe de chambre* and worn-out slippers. The soul must feel an eager desire to roam at large.

"Now, Mr. Zimmerman, as far as regards a new pair of slippers, and a clean dressing-gown, your advice has been duly attended to; but my mind is not the less vacant, whether I gaze out of window, walk, or sit down; therefore, Mr. Momus, I now entreat you to favour me with your candid opinion, whether a fool can be teased into a genius, or a genius into a fool? It strikes me, on the contrary, that, under every imaginable disadvantage, a man will contrive to improve himself, where the taste for study be genuine, and, where it does not exist, compulsion will but add disgust to what was before only indifference.

"My tutor read to me, this morning, an anecdote of Petrarch, the celebrated Italian poet. One of Petrarch's friends, the Bishop of Cavaillon, being alarmed lest the intense application with which he studied, might totally ruin a constitution already much impaired, requested of him, one day, the key of his library. Petrarch immediately give it him, and the good Bishop, instantly locking up his books and writings, said—'Petrarch, I hereby interdict you from the use of pen, ink, and paper, for the space of ten days.' The sentence was severe; but the offender suppressed his feelings, and submitted to his fate. The first day

of his exile from his favourite pursuits was tedious, the second accompanied with incessant headache, and the third brought on symptoms of an approaching fever,—'Sir,' said I, interrupting my tutor, 'my symptoms of fever are also coming on: everybody to their vocation—you must allow me to take a ride.' Farewell, Mr. Momus, I wait impatiently for your good advice, which I do not feel much afraid of; because you are neither a grey-beard nor a scholar."

"I remain, your obedient servant,

HARRY HAIRBRAIN."

Answer:

"Though I am neither a grey-beard nor a scholar, my young correspondent will not be a jot the better pleased with me, when I inform him that I would recommend his being deprived both of his horse and his liberty, and throw him altogether on the resources of his own active mind for his whole and sole amusement, amongst books and grey-beards, where he might either study, or look on, as he pleased; at the same time, I quite agree with my correspondent, as to the folly of labouring to extract blood from a stone, although this, judging from the spirit of his letter, is very far from a case in point."

It was now dinner time, so I resolved to dress for Vauxhall, after that was over.

"I wonder," said Miss Eliza Higgins, as she assisted at my toilette, "I wonder if the Earl of Fife will be at Vauxhall? What a bore this little green satin, gipsey-hat is!! and what a magnificent plume of feathers! How divinely they fall over your shoulders! What a heavenly taste *Madame le Brun* has!"

Miss Eliza Higgins, as it will be perceived, doted on superlatives.

Lord Frederic Bentinck came for me, before I was half ready.

"It's quite a bore! you always keep me waiting," said His Lordship, when I came downstairs. "I cannot amuse myself in the least, in this room, for I dare not open any one of your books, being always afraid of hitting upon something indecent or immoral."

"Come," said I, "we shall be late if you stand prosing there."

"I am thinking," said Frederick Bentinck, without stirring.

"You can think," I interrupted him, "as we go along." I took hold of his hand, and pulled him towards the door.

"Stop a minute," continued His Lordship, "and attend to what I say. I risk a great deal, in going out with a woman like you."

"What do you mean by a woman like me?"

"Why, a woman, a woman, in short, and to speak plainly, of your loose morals!"

"You blockhead!" said I, running downstairs, and having determined, in my own mind, to be even with him.

The gardens were crowded to excess.

The late Marquess of Londonderry flattered my vanity, and made me prouder than ever my conquest of Lord Worcester could do, by merely looking at me. He certainly looked a great deal more than perhaps his lady might have thought civil. He struck me, particularly on that evening, as one of the most interesting looking men I had ever seen. At first Lord Frederic seemed rather timid, in regard to my loose morals, and my strikingly elegant dress; but observing that I excited some little admiration, and that his sister, as he told me, looked at me as if she had been much surprised and pleased with me, he now grew proud of having me on his arm, and pressed forward into the crowd; but I constantly tugged at his arm, till I got into the most retired walks.

"What are you afraid of?" said Lord Frederic.

"Why, not of your loose morals; but the fact is, I, who am accustomed to go about with the chosen Apollos of the age, shall get terribly laughed at, for being at Vauxhall with such a quiz as you. Not that I doubt your being a very excellent sort of a man."

Fred Bentinck laughed, with perfect good humour. He had no vanity, and was so fond of me that I was welcome to laugh at him, and, provided he saw me amused, he was happy.

"I could listen, while Harriette talked, though it were for a year together," said Lord Frederic one day to Julia, when I was not present. Indeed he made it a point never to say anything civil to me, but all his actions proved his friendship and regard for me.

At four o'clock in the morning, I found Miss Eliza Higgins busy about the new cap which was to kill the Thane.

"Was the Earl of Fife in the gardens?" she inquired, the moment I entered my dressing-room.

The next evening, behold myself and Miss Higgins seated on the sofa, before our tea-table, in expectation of Lord Fife. Miss Higgins's new cap would have improved her beauty, had she not diminished its lustre by sitting up all night to finish it; but her fine hair, which was her solitary charm, was suffered to flow over her neck and shoulders in graceful, childish negligence. As for me, the part of second fiddle being altogether new to me, I took the liberty of appearing in my morning dress. Nine was the hour named by Lord Fife, and Miss Higgins had taken out her old-fashioned French watch, at least twenty times, since she entered the drawing-room, when the house-clock struck that wished-for and lagging hour.

"Is His Lordship punctual, generally speaking, pray, ma'am?"

"Quite the reverse, I believe," said I, half asleep.

"You have a good heart, I know, ma'am, and we females ought, naturally, to assist each other, in all our little peccadillos," remarked my companion.

"Well?"

"Why, ma'am, I am going to ask your advice, who are better acquainted with His Lordship's tastes than I am. I was thinking now, that this little netting-box is pretty and lady-like! Shall I be netting a purse? or will it have a better effect to put on my gloves, and be doing nothing?"

Before I could answer this deep question, my footman entered the room, with a letter, sealed with a large coronet, and told me that a servant waited below for an answer.

"I will ring when it is ready, James," said I, opening the letter.

"It is an excuse from the Earl of Fife!" said Miss Eliza Higgins, growing whiter than her pearl powder.

Indignation kept me silent, after reading the following impertinent letter, from the Marquis of Sligo, to whom I had only been presented the day before.

MY DEAR MISS WILSON,

Will you be so condescending as to allow me to pass this evening, alone, with you, after Lady Lansdowne's party?

SLIGO.

I had not been so enraged for several years! I rang my bell with such violence that I frightened Miss Eliza Higgins out of the very little wit she possessed.

"Who waits?" said I, to James.

"A servant, in livery," was the answer.

"Send him up to me."

A well-bred servant, in a cocked hat and dashing livery, entered my room with many bows.

"Here is some mistake," said I, presenting him the unsealed and unfolded letter of Lord Sligo's. "This letter could not be meant for me, to whom His Lordship was only presented yesterday. Take it back, young man, and say, from me, that I request he will be careful how he misdirects his letters in future; an accident which is, no doubt, caused by his writing them after dinner."

The man bowed low, and took away the open communication with him.

"The Earl may yet arrive then?" observed Miss Eliza Higgins, recovering herself.

A loud knock at the door now put the matter almost beyond a doubt, and, in another minute, in walked the redoubtable Earl of Fife! in a curious black and tan broad striped satin waistcoat, which was ornamented with a large gold chain. His watch was very gay, as were his numerous seals, at least twenty

in number. Surely, thought I, as I threw a hasty glance at Miss Eliza Higgins's long, narrow, ill-shaped forehead, brilliant with agitation and pearl-powder, surely the man must be purblind, or, it may be, his eyes were filled with dust on Sunday, when we met him in the park. However, to my astonishment, His Lordship was all rapture, and did nothing but ogle my fair *dame de compagnie*, as though she had been really fair.

As to Miss Eliza Higgins, it had been previously settled and agreed on between us, that modesty was to be the order of the day.

"I am not so vain as to fancy myself altogether handsomer than you are, madam," said the humble Miss Eliza to me, "and yet it is clear that the Earl of Fife prefers me; I therefore conceive that I may have appeared to him more timid and modest; therefore it will be better to keep up that character. Do not you agree with me, ma'am?"

"Certainly," said I.

Miss Eliza Higgins kept up the farce to excess; scarcely venturing to raise her eyes from the ground, or utter a single syllable, beyond—"Yes," or "No, my Lord",—and that in a low whisper. She did, indeed, once venture to speak, pathetically, about her grandmamma, and her dear grandpapa. Lord Fife declared to me, that she was an amiable creature, and he presumed to place a ring, of some value on her finger, on which occasion Miss Eliza Higgins appeared to be growing rather nervous. He did not take his leave, until he had obtained her permission to write to her.

"Miss Eliza Higgins," said I, as soon as we were left alone again, which was not till after midnight, "my good Miss Eliza Higgins, this atmosphere, as you expected, has proved favourable to your wishes. It has done more than your six seasons at Bath. It has, in short, brought a noble earl to your feet. *Je vous en fais mes compliments.* We will now, if you please, say adieu. Make any use you please of your conquest, and accept my thanks for having been so truly ridiculous."

Miss Eliza bridled, muttered something about our sex's

envy, and declared that she had proposed leaving me, herself.

"Agreed, then," said I, extending my hand, to shake hands. "I promise never to say anything but good of you to Lord Fife; at least not till he is quite tired of you."

Miss Eliza Higgins appeared satisfied, and wished me a good night.

"You will forward any letters that may arrive from the Earl of Fife?" said she, returning.

"Certainly."

"Why then I propose going to my grandmamma's to-morrow."

"*De tout mon cœur*," I replied, and we parted.

Half the world was at Elliston's masquerade, given at his place, as he calls the Theatre Royal, Drury-lane; therefore all I shall say about it is, that I never saw anything of the kind better conducted, and I wish he would give another, in honour of my arrival, the moment I go to London.

During supper, somebody recognised Elliston, as he passed through the room; and he was immediately hailed with three cheers.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said Elliston, who was as tipsy as usual, or rather more so, perhaps,—"Ladies and gentlemen, I did not expect to have been observed, in passing through the crowd. I am very grateful, gentlemen,—very happy, gentlemen,—quite overjoyed, gentlemen, that any efforts of mine, to please and amuse you, have been crowned with success——"

At this critical moment, somebody broke some dishes and upset a bottle of champagne.

"Easy! easy! quiet—quiet there, pray! pray!" said Elliston, addressing them by way of parenthesis.

He then continued his speech,—"Yes, gentlemen, you shall have more masquerades! and what's more, ladies and gentlemen——"

Elliston's lame speech, by this time, had excited some laughter.

"I never knew him quite so bad as this," said a gentleman on my left.

"As I was saying, gentlemen," Elliston proceeded, "I mean my kind friends, it has ever been my ambition to give you pleasure, and, gentlemen, masquerades are pleasant, merry, spirited things, particularly when the occasion is, like this, to celebrate the birth-day of our august—oh! gentlemen and ladies, *àpropos*, I had forgotten; but I now, though last, not least, beg to propose a toast, in which every one of you will join me, in your heart of hearts!"

Elliston filled a bumper, and drank—"His Majesty!"

We were all stunned with the loud cheers, three times three repeated, which followed. He then passed round the tables and stopped to speak to several of his friends, one of whom drank off one bottle of champagne with him, and then called for another.

"No more, no more," said Elliston.

"Why, man, one would think you were Cardinal Wolsey."

In about a fortnight after the opera had closed, we all arrived at Brighton.

Leinster gave way to his feelings, on the day I left town, by putting more wine into his glass than usual.

"Only say you like me better than Worcester," said His Grace, "and I shall go to Ireland in some comfort."

"I have forgotten Lord Worcester," said I.

"And you will be glad to see me on my return then?" asked Leinster.

"Certainly," I answered, "and particularly if you will leave off playing the hundred and fourth psalm on the big fiddle. I really am very tired of it."

Leinster proposed giving me "Rule Britannia," on my arrival, and promised everything I could wish.

Fred Bentinck rode by the side of my carriage for the first ten miles. He offered to drive me down all the way, with his own horses; but, on certain conditions, relative to a night on the road, which I declined.

"Well!" said Frederic, in his loud, odd voice, as he took leave of me, at The Cock at Sutton, "well, I really do hope you will

soon come back. I don't, as you know, make speeches, or pretend to be in love with you. I might have been, perhaps; but, the fact is, you are a loose woman, rather, and you know I hate anything immoral. However, you may believe me when I say that I am sorry you are leaving London."

"And what becomes of you?" I asked. "Do you mean to remain all your life in town?"

"Oh! I have a great deal to do, and my business, you know, is at the Horse Guards."

"God bless you, Frederick Bentinck," said I, as my carriage was driving off. "*Portez-vous bien*, although you certainly are enough to make me die of laughter."

"And do," said His Lordship, with his half laughing, half cross, but very odd countenance, "pray do conduct yourself with some small degree of propriety, at Brighton; and take care of your health. I have, by this day's post, written to my friend, Doctor Bankhead, about you. I think him clever; and I know he will do what he can to be of service to any favourite of mine."

We had already hired a good house, on the Marine Parade. Amy's admirer, Boultby, was one of our first visitors, and then Lords Hertford and Lowther, who were both on a visit at the Pavilion. For three whole days, Amy sickened us by the tenderness of her flirtation with Boultby, who sat lounging on her sofa, as though he had been a first rate man. At last Amy grew tired of him all at once.

"Get up," said she, rudely pushing her inamorato off the sofa.

Boultby refused, like a spoiled child, and insisted on another kiss.

"Good heavens, get up then," said Amy, "and don't tumble my ruff. I came down to Brighton for the fresh air, and, for three days, I have inhaled none of it; but only your breath, as a substitute; and I am not sure that I shall like you. Here, put your head on this pillow," added Amy, putting down his head, and rolling a thick table-napkin about it. "So let me fancy you my husband, and in your nightcap. There," said Amy, holding her head first on one side, then on the other, in order to take a

full view of his little, black, ugly face, which examination was not favourable to her lover.

"Get up this instant!" said she, with such fierceness as immediately set him on his legs.

"I told you so," said I, "but you would not believe me."

Boultby hoped his sweet Amy was joking; and he did well to make the most and best he could of the evening; for he was never admitted afterwards.

Lord Robert Manners, whose regiment was stationed in that neighbourhood, was very attentive to me. His Lordship is one of the most amiable young men I ever met with. His finely turned head might be copied for that of the Apollo Belvidere, and yet he has no vanity. In short, a more manly, honourable, unaffected being, does not exist; and much I regret the ill health under which he has always suffered. His Lordship was kind enough to give me my first lesson in riding; often accompanied by the French Duc de Guiche, who was in the Prince Regent's regiment, and Colonel Palmer. The latter invited me to accompany Lord Robert to the mess-dinner at Lewes. It must more resemble a small select private party than a mess-room, as they seldom mustered more than seven or eight persons together at table.

Bob Manners, as Lord Robert is universally called, was remarkably absent, and spoke but little, yet he possessed a certain degree of quaint, odd humour!

"Those leathers are not bad; who made them?" asked George Brummell one day of His Lordship.

"Why, the breeches maker," said Bob Manners, speaking very low.

I, accidentally, had some conversation with an old infantry officer, belonging to a regiment which had fought some very hard battles, I think it was the 50th and nick-named the dirty half-hundred; but I know their courage was in high repute, although the officers were not polished men by any means.

Speaking of Lord Robert, my new acquaintance remarked that he was a fine, high-bred looking fellow.

"The Tenth are a very fine-looking regiment, take them altogether," continued he, "and they wear very fine laced jackets; but what service have they seen? And yet they hold us poor fellows very cheap, I dare say. The anniversary dinner, by which we are to celebrate the battle where our officers are allowed to have particularly distinguished themselves, happens next Monday; but I suppose your dandies of the Tenth will not condescend to join our humble mess!"

I afterwards repeated this conversation to Lord Robert, in the presence of Colonel Palmer.

"Indeed," said His Lordship, "the regiment do us great injustice in saying we hold them cheap: on the contrary, while answering for myself, who hold their courage in the highest respect and estimation, I think I may, at the same time, answer for the whole of my regiment."

Colonel Palmer readily joined Lord Robert in his unequivocal expressions of approbation.

"For my part," continued Lord Robert, "I shall not only be happy in such an opportunity of becoming personally acquainted with the brave officers of the 50th regiment; but I shall feel hurt and astonished, if a single officer of the Tenth, now at Lewes, who may be favoured with an invitation to their dinner, should fail to attend to it. At the same time, I wish you would tell your new acquaintance that while, perhaps, we envy the laurels they have been allowed to gather, they are bound to believe in our readiness to lose our best blood in the service of our country, whenever we are permitted so to prove our courage; but it would be illiberal to blame us for the freshness of our jackets."

Every officer in the Tenth Hussars, who happened to be quartered at Lewes, made it a point, stimulated perhaps by what Lord Robert had said on the subject, to hold himself disengaged for the day on which they all fully expected to receive an invitation from the officers of the 50th regiment, when, lo!——

Not one of them was asked!!

CHAPTER XII

Lords Hertford and Lowther were our constant visitors at Brighton.

One evening, when His Majesty had a party of ladies and gentlemen at the pavilion, we concluded that Lord Hertford would not be able to leave it. However, at nine, His Lordship arrived, accompanied by a hamper of claret.

"Much as I respect His Majesty," said Lord Hertford, "I cannot stand the old women at Brighton."

We received letters from Julia and Sophia, declaring they had changed their minds, and would not join us.

I saw a great deal of the Duc de Guiche, who used to be called, while in the Tenth Hussars, the Count de Grammont, during my short stay in Brighton. He was very handsome, possessed a quick sense of honour, and ever avoided even the shadow of an obligation: I need not add that he, through strict economy, kept himself, at all times, out of debt. As an officer he was severe and ill-tempered; but well versed in military business: as a Frenchman, he was fonder of flirting than loving; and, with regard to his being a fop, what could a handsome young Frenchman do less?

I refused to see Doctor Bankhead, who had left his card, by Lord Frederic Bentinck's desire; because the world said he was a terrible fellow! However, being afterwards afflicted with an attack of inflammation in my chest, I ventured to send for this Herculean Beauty!

He cannot, thought I, be so very impudent as he has been represented to me by many, and particularly by Mr. Hoare the banker, who declared that maids, wives, and widows were often

obliged to pull their bells for protection. Then Lord Castlereagh has too much good taste to encourage and patronise him as he does, and has done for years, if he were so very bad.

Doctor Bankhead came into my bed-room, with the air and freedom of a very old acquaintance.

"What is the matter, my sweet young lady?" said he, "and what can I do for you?"

"I see! I hear!" said he, interrupting me, observing that I spoke with difficulty. "Fever? Yes," feeling my pulse. "Oppression? ah! Cough? hey? Do not speak, my sweet creature. Do not speak! You have been exposing that sweet bosom!" endeavouring to lay his hand upon it, and which I resisted with all my strength of hand.

"Nay! nay! nay! stop! stop! stop! hush! hush! You'll increase your fever, my charming young lady; and then what will our friend Fred Bentinck say? quiet! quiet! There, don't speak; can you swallow a saline draught? and I'm thinking, too, of James's powders; but it is absolutely necessary for me to press my hand on that part of your chest, or side, which is most painful to you."

"Doctor Bankhead, excuse me. This is by no means my first attack of the kind, and I pretty well know how to treat it."

"There! there! then! be quiet, my dear young lady. I give you my honour, you have already increased your fever. Hush! you will take your draught to-night?"

"Doctor Bankhead, I must——"

"Nay! nay! there! keep yourself quiet, I entreat. Quietness is everything, in these inflammatory fevers, you know, my sweet."

"Doctor Bankhead, I must ring the bell."

"Hush! there! there then! I would not frighten you for the world: and I am apt to frighten ladies, I am, indeed! hush! Be quiet! there then! hush! I am, indeed, as you may have heard, a most terrible fellow! Be quiet, my sweet lady! Swallow this glass of lemonade! There! now lie very still. In short, so terrible am I, that I frighten every woman on earth, except Mrs. Bankhead, and my Lady Heathcote!! hush!"

"Doctor Bankhead! this is an unmanly advantage of——"

"Oh! you naughty creature, to flurry yourself! I would not frighten you for the world! And, since I am so terrifying, take me altogether——"

"Doctor Bankhead, I'll ring the bell": and I tried to reach it.

"You shall have just as much, or as little of me as you please. Be still! pray! pray! and this is an offer I never before made to any woman: not even to my dear friend, Lady Heathcote."

Dr. Bankhead laid his giant-hand on my bosom, to demonstrate one of his former feats. My passions were now roused in a peculiar manner, and, catching hold of my bell, I never ceased ringing it till my maid appeared.

I desired her to show Dr. Bankhead out of my house, "and, above all things, do not leave my room without him."

Good morning, to you, my sweet, comical lady," said Bankhead, and left the house.

In about two months we all grew tired of Brighton, except Fanny, who had never been happier than while galloping over the Downs with the first man she had really loved; perhaps the first who had treated her with the respect and kindness her very excellent and benevolent qualities so well deserved.

I often heard from Fred Bentinck, as well as from His Grace of Leinster. The latter joined me in London, towards the end of November. I had only been settled there a few days, when I was surprised by a visit from the young Marquis of Worcester, whose very existence I had almost forgotten.

He expressed his gratitude for being admitted; and sat with me for two hours, when our *tête-à-tête* was interrupted by Leinster. He then took his leave, having conversed only on indifferent subjects, without once touching on the passion Lord Deerhurst and several others had assured me that he entertained for me.

Leinster appeared much annoyed at the reappearance of Worcester, and talked of going to Spain.

"I am a great fool," said His Grace, "and travelling may make me wiser."

I shook my head.

"At all events," continued His Grace, "I shall be out of the way of seeing Worcester make love to you. I am no match for him, being of a colder and less romantic turn. Worcester would go to the devil for you; and will make you love him, sooner or later. I cannot contend with him, and, therefore, I have almost decided to go with my brother, Lord Henry, and young Fitzgibbon, to the Continent."—"In the meantime," said I, "you really are wrong to tease yourself about Lord Worcester, who never makes love to me; and this morning, he talked of nothing but riding, and Lord Byron's poetry, and music. He did not even offer to shake hands with me, and when I held out my hand for that purpose, he seemed to shake and tremble, as though it had been something quite unnatural."

"When are you to see him again?"

I assured His Grace that nothing like an appointment had been made, and all Lord Worcester had said on the subject, was a request to be allowed to call sometimes to pay his respects, and make his bow.

I went to call on Fanny, after His Grace left me. Lord Alvanly and Amy were with her, and her eternal admirer, Baron Tuille, who told us that Lord Worcester did nothing but inquire of every man he met, whether they had heard anything relative to the departure of Leinster for Spain.

"That's a very fine young man, that Marquis of Worcester," said Amy. "I should like to be introduced to him, only I suppose Harriette, with her usual jealousy, will prevent me."

"On the contrary," said I, "Fanny heard me invite him to your party, after the opera, the very evening he was presented to me, and he refused to go."

"What a rude way of putting it," said Baron Tuille. "Why not say, he was obliged to return to Oxford, and was *en désespoir!*"

"*De tout mon cœur!* put it how you please," said I.

"I've some news for you," said Fanny. "Sophia has made a new conquest of an elderly gentleman, in a curricle, with a

coronet on it. He does nothing on earth, from morning till night, but drive up and down before Julia's door. Julia is quite in a passion about it, and says it looks so very odd."

"Talk of the devil," said Alvanly, as Julia and Sophia entered the room.

"Of fair Hebe rather," Baron Tuille observed.

"Well, Miss Sophia, so you've made a new conquest?" said Fanny.

"Yes," answered Sophia; "but it is of a very dowdy dry-looking man."

"But then his curricle!" I interrupted.

"Yes, to be sure, I should like to drive out in his curricle, of all things."

"It is very odious of the fright, to beset my door as he does," Julia said

"So it is, quite abominable; and, for my part, I hate him, and his curricle too," good-natured Sophia replied.

"But answer me," said Baron Tuille, addressing himself to me, "does the Duke of Leinster go to the Continent this year?"

"What is that to you?" I asked.

"Only to satisfy poor Worcester, who is so miserable about him. For my part, I asked him why he did not run away with you by force? but he said, force was good for nothing; and that while I permitted Leinster to visit me, he was perfectly wretched. Suspense was the devil, and he could not think why Leinster bothered at all about going to Spain, unless he really had some such intention."

"I believe you are all laughing at me," said I, "and I don't deserve it; for no one can say I am vain; but if I were, no vanity, not even that of the Honourable John William Ward, could construe Lord Worcester's prim conversation into love for me. True, he blushes and trembles, which, in a lad of such mature worldly manners, who has already been so much in society, does look a little like love; but this is the only sign I have witnessed."

"Depend upon it he is in a desperate bad way," lisped out Alvanly.

"Were you ever seriously in love, my Lord?" I asked.

"Oh, tremendously, last year," answered His Lordship; "but then I fancied it was with a woman of fashion. God bless your soul, a fine carriage, on a perch, with scarlet blinds! Could you have imagined she would ever have asked me for money?"

"And what answer did you make?"

"Answer? Why, I told her that I would have preferred death to even the risk of insulting her; but, since she had destroyed all my illusion, I now was disposed to look upon her in a different light, and pay her accordingly, at the rate of five hundred a year; which was handsome for the time I should continue with her, which, by-the-bye, would not have been longer than five minutes! However, she refused to have anything more to do with me; and I have now, thank God, entirely recovered my peace of mind."

Worcester was riding near my door as I drove up to it. I stopped to ask him if he liked to join me at Astley's, where I proposed going, with the Duke of Leinster. He hesitated, and seemed really annoyed at the idea of Leinster being of the party.

"If you really wish it," said His Lordship, reddening.

"Oh, I shall not break my heart," I answered, "only it has struck me, and has struck others, that you liked me, therefore I conceived the proposal might be agreeable."

"I am afraid," said Lord Worcester, "that I shall be thought very intrusive and impertinent; but I am most anxious and desirous to be allowed to say one word to you, before you go to Astley's to-night."

"Leinster comes for me at half-past seven," I replied, "so call at seven."

Worcester rode off, all gratitude.

I was surprised to find Leinster sitting at my pianoforte, in my drawing-room, when I got upstairs. "What, again at your hundred and fourth psalm?" said I, "after all the promises you have made to become less righteous?"

"I have a favour to ask," said Leinster, and the boy's usual open smile was fled, and he looked infinitely more interesting; because he was paler, and there was an air of sensibility about him, which was seldom the case.

"My dear little Harry," said he, passing his hand across his curly locks, "I am annoyed, and bothered to death, with Worcester's perseverance. I am going to Spain. I shall stay, perhaps, several years, and you and I may never meet again. I know you are going to remind me that you never professed any particular love for me, and that you never deceived me as to your love of liberty; but I am not asking anything of you as a right; I am only making an appeal to your good nature, when I entreat you not to receive Worcester's visits till I am gone, which will be, I hope, in less than six weeks. It should be sooner, but that I have many things to arrange, relative to my coming of age."

The simplicity, and feeling manner, in which Leinster delivered his little speech, affected me a good deal. No one, not even Fred Bentinck, could ever attach himself to me without inspiring me with such friendship as results from a grateful heart. I believe all who know me will admit, what I certainly can affirm to be true, namely, that no success of mine ever once led me to fancy a single heart had been mine by right, or *à cause de mon propre mérite*, nor was I coquette enough to desire general admiration. On the contrary, I thought it hard, and often a bore, that my gratitude should so frequently be taxed, for what gave me no pleasure.

"Do not go, Leinster," said I, kissing the eye, where a tear was glistening; "and, as long as you will stay, I will tell Worcester I must decline receiving his visits."

"When," said Leinster, while a bright smile played on his full red lip, which was very pretty, and always looked as though a bee had stung it newly, "when will you tell him this?"

"His Lordship is coming here, at seven, and I will then give him his congé, *tout de bon*," said I.

Leinster hurried off, in high spirits, that he might get back in time to take me to Astley's.

Lord Worcester came to me before I had finished my dinner. He assured me that he now proposed to accompany me, if I still would permit him, to Astley's; "but," said Lord Worcester, after some hesitation, "you are, I am sure you must be, aware that my being present, to see the Duke of Leinster, or indeed any man on earth, conduct you home, is very hard upon me."

"I hope not," said I, "and certainly I am not aware of any such thing. You are neither my husband nor my lover, and you never made any professions of love to me; I hope you felt none; because"—and I hesitated in my turn.

"Because what?" said Lord Worcester, in almost breathless anxiety.

"Because my old friend, the Duke of Leinster, feels much annoyed at your visits, and——"

"And you assured me he was indifferent to you," interrupted Worcester.

"I said, I was not in love with him, neither am I; but I cannot bear teasing him; so, to be frank with you, and one must be frank when one is in such a hurry," continued I, laughing, "I have promised to beg of you, as a favour, not to come here any more."

Lord Worcester's face was scarlet first, and then pale as death: he took up his hat, half in indignation, and then put it down, in despair! Had I been more humble than I really am, I could not, with common sense, have doubted the deep impression I had made on Worcester.

"*Ecoutez, mon ami*," said I, holding out my hand to him. "I cannot account for the prejudice which runs high in my favour, among you young men of rank. I am inclined, rather to attribute it to fashion, or some odd accident, than to any peculiar merit on my part: still, flattered as I ought to be, and deeply grateful as I always am, it will yet be paying very dear for the impression which is excited in my favour, if, while my own heart happens to be free as air, and my fancy ever laughter-

loving, I am to condole, all the morning, with one fool, and sympathise, the blessed long evening, with another; neither can I be tender and true to a dozen of you at a time."

"I did not," said Worcester, half indignantly, "I did not know that I was quite a fool; and, at all events, I shall not intrude my folly on you, if I am."

In vain he tried to pull his hat completely over his eyes. The tears did not glisten there, as they did in Leinster's; but they fell in torrents, as he attempted to take leave of me.

Oh dear me! said I, as I sighed an inward good-bye to the self-same harlequin-farces at which I had laughed so heartily many years before, when I accompanied poor Tom Sheridan to Astley's.

"What am I to do, Lord Worcester?" I asked. "Upon my word I would rather suffer anything myself, than cause unhappiness to those who love me. I don't care a bit about myself. Only tell me what I can do for you, and Leinster, and my sister Fanny? For all who love me, in short; for I would make all happy, if I could; provided they don't grow too pathetic!"

"My dear, dearest Harriette," said Lord Worcester, "no man on earth, feeling as I have done, could have been less pathetic, as you call it, than I have been, for more than six months that all my prayers, my hopes, and my wishes, have been for you, and your love, and happiness. I have seldom visited you, and never, at least till to-day, done any one thing that could possibly bore or offend you."

I could not but acknowledge this to be true.

"Well, then," continued Worcester, "I will throw myself on my knees.——"

"No, pray don't," I exclaimed, "I really must go to Astley's, I have not a moment to lose. My word is pledged to Leinster; but I believe that you love me better than he is capable of loving anything, and, since you are good enough to value my friendship, I will not cut you, indeed I will not," and I gave him my hand, which he covered with warm kisses and warmer tears.

"You must go now," I added; "I never break my word, and

Leinster will be here directly; but, when he goes to Spain"——

"Does he go?" interrupted Worcester, eagerly.

"Everything is settled," answered I, "and, in less than six weeks, Leinster can torment you no more."

Worcester appeared to be overjoyed.

"And when he is gone, there will be no man, you care about, left in England?"

"None: except indeed a sort of tenderness, not amounting to anything like passion, for Lord Robert Manners: and then I have a great respect for Lord Frederic's morals, and that is all! So now, my Lord, you must set off, and do be merry. You shall hear from me often, and, as soon as Leinster is gone, you are welcome to try to make me in love with you. If you fail, so much the worse for us both; since I hold everything which is not love to be mere dull intervals in life."

"I may not call on you then?" asked Worcester.

"I will write, and tell you all about it."

There was now a loud rap at the door.

"I am off," said Worcester. "I cannot bear to sit here a single instant, with Leinster. *En grace je te prie, mon ange, ayez pitié de moi, et ne m'oubliez pas.*" He dropped on one knee to kiss my hand, like a knight of old, and the next instant he was out of sight.

"Was that the Marquis of Worcester, who ran out of your house in such a hurry, as I was getting out of my carriage?" asked Leinster, as he entered the room, full dressed, his handsome leg, *en gros*, set off to the best advantage by a fine silk stocking.

"Yes," said I, "but I have desired him not to come again; so pray don't be sentimental. I have had enough of that, this day, to last me my life."

"You are very cold and heartless, which is what, from the expression of your eyes, I had never suspected," remarked Leinster.

"I was in love enough once," I rejoined, "God knows, and what good did it do me?"

After all, I arrived at Astley's just in time for my favourite harlequinade. The house was well attended. I thought that I observed the Marquis of Worcester, slyly glancing at us through the trelliswork of a stage-box: but I was not quite certain. After the piece was finished, I wanted to set Leinster down at his own door; but he declared himself so hungry, that he could not get further than Westminster-bridge without a slice of bread and butter, quite as thick as those his tutor Mr. Smith used to provide him with. This luxury his footman procured, together with a tankard of ale, from a pot-house in the immediate vicinity of the theatre.

The next morning Fanny came to take leave of me. Colonel Parker could no longer be absent from his regiment, which was stationed at Portsmouth, therefore they proposed leaving London for that place on the following day.

"Remember me, kindly, to Lord Worcester, when you see him," said Fanny. "There is something in that young man's countenance I like so much, and his manners are so excessively high bred and gentleman-like, that I cannot think how you can resist him, and treat him so very coldly as you do. As to Amy, she is going stark mad to be introduced to him."

"With all my heart," said I.

We were now interrupted by the Prince Esterhazy, who entered, all over mud, saying, "*Comment ça va?*" without taking off his hat.

"We are discussing the merits of the young Marquis of Worcester, Prince," Fanny observed to him,

"A very fine young man, to be sure, certainly," said Esterhazy; "but, good mines God, can you not take him one, to yourself, instead of all these young fellows, running, *toujours*, after you. I could not come near you for a mile the other night, you have so many people round about you."

"That was because you did not take off your hat," I said.

"It is my way," answered the Prince; "and I do the same to the Queen."

"*Ca se peut*," said I, "*mais, moi, je prétends que vous ne le ferez*

pas ici: ainsi votre seigneurie aura la bonté, ou d'ôter votre chapeau, ou de vous en aller tout suite."

"*Je prendrai la dernière partie*," answered the Prince, putting on his great coat, and retiring.

"You have been too severe, Harriette," said Fanny, after Prince Esterhazy had taken his departure.

I would not have been so to a poor man; but, really, I have no idea of having one's house mistaken for a cabaret, by a nasty coarse German, who, with all his impudence, is, as I am informed, the meanest man alive: besides he always stands with his back to the fire, without paying the least attention, when the ladies shiver and shake, and vow and declare they are dying with cold!

Fanny told me, calling another subject, that Julia had not only surmounted her reluctance to Napier, but had become almost as fond of him as she had been of Sir Harry Mildmay; and that was the reason why she refused to join us at Brighton.

I inquired whether he seemed disposed to behave well to Julia, and her family?

"Oh, he is horridly stingy," answered Fanny, "and Julia is obliged to affect coldness and refuse him the slightest favour till he brings her money; otherwise she would get nothing out of him. Yet he seems to be passionately fond of her, and writes sonnets on her beauty, styling her, at forty, although the mother of nine children, "his beautiful maid".

Fanny having her carriage at the door, I proposed our calling on Julia.

"I am going to take my leave of her," Fanny replied, and we drove immediately to her residence.

Julia, whose health had been very delicate since her last premature confinement, was gracefully reclining on her *chaise longue*, in a most elegant morning-dress. She expected Napier to dine with her. Sophia was hammering at a little country dance on the pianoforte.

To our inquiry how her curricle-beau went on? She answered: "Oh! he is always driving about this neighbourhood,

and I think I have discovered who he is. I believe it to be Lord Berwick; but I am not quite certain. However, we are to be introduced to him, to-morrow, by Lord William Somerset, who has been here this morning to ask Julia's permission to present a friend. He did not name him, but assured us he was a nobleman of fortune, and of great respectability."

We wished her joy, and kissed her, and took our leave of Julia, as I afterwards did of Fanny, whose departure made me very melancholy. She was the only sister who cared about me, and we had very seldom, in the course of our lives, been separated from each other. We promised to correspond regularly, and I assured her that, when she should be settled at Portsmouth, if she acquainted me that she had a spare bed for me, I would certainly pay her a visit.

"Tell me all about Lord Worcester," said Fanny, "and you may say to him that it is lucky for Colonel Parker His Lordship never turned an eye of love on me."

I came home very dull indeed, and was informed that Leinster, who had been waiting for me more than an hour, had just left the house; but a genteel young Frenchwoman was still in my dressing-room. She came to offer herself, in the place of my late *dame de compagnie*, Miss Eliza Higgins.

"*Je vous salue, mademoiselle*," said I, as I entered my little boudoir. "*D'où venez-vous?*"

She informed me that she had been living with Lady Caroline Lamb.

I liked her appearance very much: it was modest, quiet, and unaffected. What a contrast to that Miss Eliza Higgins! She did not look as if she was twenty; but she assured me, *sur son honneur*, she was in her twenty-sixth year. I engaged her at once, declined to inquire her character of Lady Caroline, and requested her to come to me the next day.

I never talk much to servants or companions when they come to be hired. If I dislike their faces, I tell them I am engaged: if the contrary is the case, I desire them to come to me on trial. Wherefore should one ask them, can you dress hair? Are you

quick, good-tempered, honest, handy, etc., etc., when one can as well answer all these questions, in their name, oneself, with a single yes?

I passed a restless night. No woman ever felt *le besoin d'aimer* with greater ardour than I. What could I not have been? what could I not have undertaken for the friend, the companion, the husband of my choice? *En attendant*, methought, Lord Worcester knew how to love: that was something; but then, where was the power of thought, the magic of the mind which alone could insure my respect and veneration?

The next morning, my new French maid, who had just arrived, brought me, not a letter but a volume, from Lord Worcester: it was not a bad letter. No letter is uninteresting which is written naturally and feelingly.

"Does this young man love me?" I asked of Luttrell, who called on me before I had finished my breakfast, as I presented to him the young Marquis's effusion.

"With all his soul, his heart, and his strength," answered Luttrell.

Leinster was my next visitor, and then Lord Robert Manners, dressed in a red waistcoat, corduroy breeches, worsted stockings, and thick shoes, which, I think, had nails in them: yet, in spite of all this, he looked very handsome. The Duke of Wellington came next.

"Why the devil did not your servant tell me that all these people were here?" whispered the merely mortal hero, as he bolted downstairs, and ran foul of Lord William Russell in the passage.

"When do you mean to come and pass a month at Lewes?" asked Lord Robert Manners.

"Your application comes too late, Master Bob," said George Brummell, who had just entered the room. "Harriette is about to bestow her fair hand on the young Marquis of Worcester. But your fingers are covered with ink, man! How happened that?" continued the beau, eyeing His Lordship's hands with a look of undisguised horror.

"Franking a letter for some fool or another: such a nuisance!" answered Bob Manners, looking at his fingers pettishly.

These men talked a great deal more nonsense, only I have forgotten it. After they were gone, I made my young French woman bring her work into my dressing-room for an hour.

"How did you like Lady Caroline Lamb?" I asked her, and, when she had answered all my questions, I sat down to scribble the following letter to my sister Fanny at Portsmouth.

My Dearest Fanny,

The frank Lord William has left for you, must not be lost, although I really have, as yet, nothing new or lively to communicate. Your favourite, Lord Worcester, has not been admitted since you were in town, notwithstanding he writes me such letters! but I will enclose one of them, to save trouble, for one grows tired of all this nonsense. Poor Leinster is infinitely more attentive and amiable, since this powerful rival has put him upon his mettle. For my part, since the hope of mutual mind is over, I try, and make the best of this life, by laughing at it and all its cares.

My new French maid has just been telling me a great deal about her late mistress, Lady Caroline Lamb. Her Ladyship's only son is, I understand, in a very bad state of health. Lady Caroline has therefore hired a stout young doctor to attend on him; and the servants, at Melbourne House, have the impudence to call him Bergami! He does not dine or breakfast with Lady Caroline or her husband, who, you know, is Fred Lamb's brother, the Honourable William Lamb; but he is served in his own room, and Her Ladyship pays great attention to the nature and quality of his repasts. The poor child being subject to violent attacks in the night, Lady Caroline is often to be found, after midnight, in the doctor's bedchamber, consulting him about her son. I do not mean you to understand this ironically, as the young Frenchwoman says herself, there, very likely, is nothing in it, although the servants tell a story about a little silk stocking, very like Her Ladyship's, having been found, one morning, quite at the bottom of the doctor's bed. This doctor, as Thérèse tells me, is a coarse, stupid-looking,

ugly fellow; but then Lady Caroline declares to her, que monsieur le docteur a du fond!

She is always trying to persuade her servants that sleep is unnecessary, being une affaire d'habitude seulement. *She often called up Thérèse in the middle of the night, and made her listen while she touched the organ in a very masterly style.*

Her Ladyship's poetry, says Thérèse, is equally good in French, in English, or in Italian; and I have seen some excellent specimens of her talents for caricatures. She sometimes hires a servant, and sends him off the next day for the most absurd reasons: such as "Thomas! you look as if you required a dose of salts; and, altogether, you do not suit me, etc." She is the meanest woman on earth, and the greatest tyrant, generally speaking, quoiqu'elle a ses moments de bonté; *but as to her husband, he is at all times proud, severe, and altogether disagreeable.*

Lady Caroline ate and drank enough for a porter, and, when the doctor forbade wine, she was in the habit of running into her dressing-room, to dédommager *herself with a glass or two of* eau de vie vieille de cognac! *One day, Thérèse, whose bedchamber adjoined that of William Lamb, overheard the following conversation between them.*

Lady C. *I must and will come into your bed. I am your lawful wife. Why am I to sleep alone?*

William. *I'll be hanged if you come into my bed, Caroline; so you may as well go quietly into your own.*

Lady Caroline persevered.

"*Get along, you little drunken——," said William Lamb.*

The gentle Caroline wept at this outrage.

'Mais ou est, donc, ce petit coquin de docteur?" *said William, in a conciliatory tone.*

"Ah! il a du fond, ce docteur-la," *answered Caroline, with a sigh*!

Mind, I don't give you all this nonsense for truth; I merely repeat the stories of my young Frenchwoman: and Lady Caroline has assured her housekeeper that Thérèse abhors a lie. Take Her Ladyship altogether, this comical woman must be excellent com-

pany. I only wish I had the honour of being of her acquaintance. Not that I think much of her first novel, "Glenarvon"; and she is, really, not quite mad enough to excuse her writing, in her husband's lifetime, while under his roof, the history of her love and intrigue with Lord Byron! ! The letters are really His Lordship's, for he told me so himself. I once asked Luttrell, who was a particular acquaintance of William Lamb, why that gentleman permitted his wife to publish such a work?

"I have already put the very same question to William, myself," answered Luttrell, "and this was his reply: 'I give you my word and honour, Luttrell, that I never heard one single word about "Glenarvon", until Caroline put her book into my own hands, herself, on the day it was published.' "

Lady Caroline, I am told, always speaks of her husband with much respect, and describes her anxiety about his maiden speech in the House of Commons, to witness which she had, in the disguise of a boy, contrived to pass into the gallery: But enough of Her Ladyship, of whose nonsense the world is tired. I admire her talents, and wish she would make a better use of them.

Poor Alvanly's carriage-horses, have, I fancy, been taken in execution. However, he said, last night at Amy's, that he had a carriage at the ladies' service, only he had got no horses; so we set him down.

"I cannot find any knocker, my Lord," said the footman, at our carriage door, after fumbling about for some time.

"Knock with your stick," said Alvanly, and then continued his conversation to us, "my d——d duns made such a noise every morning, I could not get a moment's rest, till I ordered the knocker to be taken off my street door."

Julia, most prolific Julia, is again in the way fair ladies sometimes wish to be, et vous? *Your boy George is in high health; not quite as impudent and lazy as usual. Our dear mother has not looked so well, or more beautiful for the last ten years. She is very anxious about your health. Do not let her fears, arising out of her extreme tenderness of heart, frighten you, who are looking as blooming and well as possible; though certainly, as a matter of*

common prudence, you ought to refrain from such hard riding, being naturally so delicate.

Lord Worcester has been making up to Julia, who has promised to be his friend with me, I mean to a certain extent; but, when he teases her to tell him whether he has any chance of ever having me under his protection, she declares she knows nothing about me or my plans, except that I am always the most determined, obstinate woman in Europe. Brummell they say is entirely ruined. In short, everybody is astonished, and puzzled to guess how he has gone on so long! God bless you, my dearest Fanny. I meant only to write three lines, and here is a volume for you. Remember me kindly to Colonel Parker, and believe me ever,

Your affectionate sister,

HARRIETTE.

P.S. Do, pray, keep yourself warm: particularly your chest. Dr. Bain says your little cough is chiefly nervous; but I am anxious to hear how the air of Portsmouth agrees with you; therefore write soon, all about it.

CHAPTER XIII

Viscount Berwick was a nervous, selfish, odd man, and afraid to drive his own horses. Lord William Somerset was an excellent whip; but he had no horses to whip. Lord Berwick, like Lord Barrymore, wanted a tiger; while Somerset required a man whose curricle he could drive, and whose money he could borrow. The bargain was struck; and Tiger Somerset had driven Lord Berwick some years, when His Lordship, after having for more than a fortnight been looking at my sister Sophia, at her window, one day addressed the tiger as follows:

"I have, at last, found a woman I should like to marry, Somerset, and you know I have been more than twenty years upon the lookout."

"Who is she?" said Somerset, in some alarm.

Berwick told him all he knew, and all he had seen of Sophia.

"I think I know who you mean," said Tiger, "since you mention the house; because it belongs to Miss Storer, Lord Carysfort's niece, who has, I know, a fine young girl staying with her, whom Lord Deerhurst seduced."

"Seduced, already! you do not say so?"

"Most true, my Lord," said Tiger Somerset; "besides, I've often seen her, when Deerhurst used to take her out last year. She has no eyebrows, and——"

"I don't care for that, I love the girl, and will have her," was His Lordship's knock-down argument; and Lord William Somerset, having obtained permission from Julia, presented Lord Berwick to Sophia on the following morning.

Sophia would not hear of such a very nasty, poking, old, dry man, on his first visit; but the second day, she was induced to

drive out in his barouche. On the third, she declared His Lordship's equipage the easiest she ever rode in; but then he wore such a large hat! In short, she could not endure him, even to shake hands with her. I never knew Sophia evince so much decided character, since she was born, as in her dislike of Lord Berwick; though she condescended to enter his barouche, and dine with him, accompanied by Julia or myself, yet no persuasion of Lord Berwick, no prayers that His Lordship had wit to make, could prevail on her to trust herself, for an instant, in his society. Things went on this way for several weeks. Berwick made very pleasant parties to Richmond, and did everything with princely magnificence. Worcester's good uncle, Lord Berwick's tiger, wanted Worcester to join their parties, and Worcester would not go anywhere without me.

My time being so gaily taken up, I had to reproach myself with neglect towards my sister Fanny. "Give me my writing-desk," said I to my maid, Thérèse, at past four in the morning, "for I have made a vow not to sleep till I have fully answered Fanny's last two letters," and which I did, as follows:

MY DEAREST SISTER,

It is past four o'clock in the morning, and yet my conscience still keeps me awake till I have answered your two letters. Believe me, my neglect does not, in the least, proceed from want of affection. One is sometimes teased into going out, till one acquires a sort of habit of society, which it becomes difficult to throw off. Sophia's new lover, Lord Berwick, did not let me enjoy a single day in quiet; and not at all out of regard or respect for my superior merit; but merely because Sophia refuses to stir without me.

The Duke of Leinster's departure for Spain is at last absolutely fixed for next Monday. Lord Worcester heard this at White's club-house, and was so overjoyed that everybody in the room laughed at him. For my part I can scarcely understand why I feel so melancholy at the thought of losing a young man whom I really never cared about; but I am always thus, at parting with anybody to whose face I have become accustomed. Not only am I sorry to

lose the Duke of Leinster, but I feel angry and disgusted with Worcester for desiring his departure.

We were all at the play last night: that is to say, Julia, Sophia, Lord W. Somerset, Lord Berwick, and Lord Worcester, with your humble servant, in two private boxes adjoining each other. Lord Berwick teases Julia and me from morning till night. He wants us to persuade Sophia to receive a settlement from him, of five hundred a year, and to place herself under his protection. We do not like to advise at all on such subjects; and whenever he ventures to touch on them to Sophia herself, she begins to sob and cry, as if she were threatened with sudden death! I asked her, last night, why she accepted so many magnificent presents from His Lordship, and suffered him to put himself to such an immense expense, if she disliked him so violently?

"Oh, I never said I disliked his carriages, or his jewels, or his nice dinners," answered Sophia.

Lord Worcester is quite as indefatigable as Lord Berwick, in his endeavours to persuade me to accompany him to Brighton, His Lordship having just entered the tenth Hussars. Lord Berwick proposes taking a fine house at Brighton for Sophia and Julia, and sending down his plate, man-cook, etc. but Sophia says he may hire his fine house if he likes, but for her part she will live with Julia in a smaller one, though, at the same time, she shall have no sort of objection to become one at his dinner parties, if Worcester and myself are present. Thus Sophia has set Lord Berwick to work, to plead Worcester's cause for him. I got into a passion one day last week, and declared I would not be teased out of my liberty, which I valued more than my life.

In the evening, Lord Worcester found me seriously ill, with an oppression on my chest, to which I am become rather subject. I could not have imagined that any young man, in any class of life, could have made such a good nurse! He ran up and down, from the kitchen to the drawing-room, twenty times, and poured out my water-gruel, and my tea, as though this had been his natural vocation. Seriously, I was very grateful. Nothing attaches a woman, in my weak, nervous, state of health, like these kind of attentions;

and I must do justice to the excellent taste of Worcester, in never intruding his passion on me.

"Let Harriette please herself, or rather, Harriette must do as God pleases, about loving me, but my affection for her cannot change. I live in her happiness, whoever may contribute to it. I may be miserable; but I shall never cease to love her": and then he winds up his letters thus: "may my God forsake me, if ever I love another woman! and may I be eternally wretched, if ever, in word or deed, I am unfaithful to you, to the latest hour of my life!"

I, who am, as you know, anything but cold-hearted, of course feel touched by Lord Worcester's apparent devotion to me; but I am not a bit touched with love. The tenderness of a sister is all I feel. Good heavens! what can he expect, from one who has loved as I have loved, and gone through what I have gone through!

I don't think I shall go to Brighton, or to Worcester. I am tired of flattery: it makes me sick; for I know that I am nothing particular, or Ponsonby would have died rather than have left me to such despair as he did. I am now beginning to dislike society, and when I cannot enjoy that of very clever, intelligent people, I could rather read Shakespeare's plays, "Gil Blas", or the "Vicar of Wakefield".

Poor Leinster! that man is only about three degrees and a half above a good-tempered Newfoundland dog, and yet I am sorry he is leaving me, perhaps for ever.

I often think what I might have been, and then I wonder much that I am what I am! I love home, I am somewhat domestic, I love, dearly love my parents, and wish to improve the little talents God has given me. I am very affectionate, and naturally honourable; because I abhor a lie! and yet behold me! !—Harriette Wilson.

"If you were to die, who would stand my friend, when the world tramples on me?" I put this question to Worcester the other day, after I had been frightening myself about your health; and Worcester shed a great many tears, as though the idea of my ever being left friendless, affected him deeply. Yet, no doubt, the time will come, and you and I, if we live, shall witness it, when Worcester,

having forgotten my very existence will, while the lady of his heart, or his wife, is hanging on his arm, pass me by as a perfect stranger! This too I said to Worcester, and, unasked, almost unattended to, by me, he solemnly pledged himself to have no wife, on earth or in heaven, but myself, and wrote down the oath.

Enough of the sublime and the pathetic: and now a word or two about yourself; but, let me remind you first, that it is at your own particular request I have been such an egotist.

I am glad to hear that Parker looks forward with so much delight to the idea of becoming a father. It is a strong proof of a good heart, generally speaking. With regard to the repugnance you say you feel, in availing yourself of the invitations from ladies who believe you to be Parker's wife, I certainly, in your place, would never seek them; neither are you bound to say anything of yourself, which can prejudice society against you. You tell me that some of the ladies in your neighbourhood will take no excuses. Well, then, visit them, whenever you are in the humour, and, if they have good taste, they will be delighted with your society.

I cannot express to you how glad I was to learn, from your last letter, that you are more comfortable and happy than you have ever been in your life before. Did you get a letter from our dear mother yesterday? Napier is at Melton Mowbray. To-morrow we all dine with Lord Berwick again, at his house in Grosvenor Square.

I meet Worcester at everybody's house but my own, where, out of respect for Leinster, I seldom admit him; since, by the powers, and upon his honour, it bothers him to death.

Amy has, at this present writing, a great deal of work on her hands, owing to our general change or projected change of administration. Worcester, Berwick, Parker, and Napier; all to win, and seduce away, at once! ! !

Parker she has already made an attempt on: this you, with all your good-natured charity, have confessed: and the other night, at the play, we observed her sitting in a private box, on the opposite side of the house, with Baron Tuille. Her glass was pointedly turned towards Worcester, all the evening. After the play, while we were waiting for our carriage, Amy, with an affectation of

childish wildness, made loud remarks on the elegance of Worcester's person, as we passed her. Our party stood on the opposite side of the room from that where the Baron and Amy were waiting. Worcester was, however, obliged to pass close to them, to inquire for Lord Berwick's servants, and Tuille, at the express desire of Amy, probably, tapped him on the arm, as he was hurrying along, and requested to have the pleasure of introducing Mrs. Sydenham to him. Worcester, in much confusion, bowed low, very low; but passed on, immediately afterwards, without uttering a single syllable.

What a bore for Amy! and yet it serves her right!

"I could not possibly avoid being presented to your sister," said Lord Worcester, on his return; and he spoke with such agitation and confusion, that it was impossible to help laughing at him.

"You were not very attentive to her, as, I think, I could observe," Julia remarked.

"I would not have spoken a single word to her, for the world, and I only wish, as a gentleman, it had been possible to have avoided bowing. Mrs. Sydenham has, by her perseverance, made herself so very odious to me," was Worcester's reply.

Lord Berwick laughed heartily at his extreme delicacy; so did Lord William; but Worcester is steady as a rock to me, and my interests. Not even ridicule, the sharpest weapon which malice can turn against the feelings and prejudices of youth, ever changes him one jot, even when it wounds him most severely.

"Any unimpassioned, unprejudiced observer of Harriette's mind and character," says Worcester, "must agree with me that it is much undervalued by that part of the world, to whom her eccentricities and careless observance of many established forms, only are known; but Harriette's goodness and singleness of heart approximate her nearer to my idea of perfection, than any human being I have yet met with, and her face and person, to me, convey all I can imagine most desirable."

I repeat this to you, my dear Fanny, merely to show the force and power of ardent passion in youth. Dieu! comme cela nous embellit!

O, la belle passion que l'amour! *not that I have known much good resulting from it. I might almost say, with Candide,* "Hélas! je l'ai connu, cet amour, ce souverain des cœurs! cette âme de notre âme! cependant, il ne m'a jamais valu qu'un baiser, et vingt coups de pied! puisse il vous être plus propice!"

You shall hear what becomes of me, next Tuesday, after Leinster will have left London. In the meantime, I need not say how truly I am yours, etc.

HARRIETTE.

Fanny's answer:

My dear Harriette, it is very lucky you wrote when you did; because I was getting in such a very great passion! Lord Worcester, from what you tell me, and from all I have seen, is, without any exception, the most interesting young man I ever knew; and I am surprised you do not think him handsome. Do remember me to him, very tenderly: as to your stupid Duke of Leinster, he never deserved you.

I am just returned from the Isle of Wight. The weather was rather rough, and, at best, I cannot say I like sailing half as well as riding; nevertheless, we have been very merry; Parker is so kind and affectionate, and the officers of his regiment are so very attentive and polite to me.

Who do you think I met at Cowes? No less a personage than your friend, and kind creditor, Mr. Smith, of Oxford Street. I recognised him by his voice, as he was addressing a little fat friend of his. We were sitting on a bench, near enough to hear every word they said.

"Mr. Smith," said the little fat man, holding out his hand, "mercy on me! Smith! Is it really you? What in the name of wonder can have brought you to Cowes?"

"Vy, Lord," answered Smith, "vat but the vinds and the vaves could bring me here, hey? I've been down to Margate since I seed you. Bless your life, I'm on a tower."

"What might that be, pray?"

"Vy, a tower, man. Don't you know vat a tower is?"

"Not I, indeed."

"Vy, you stupid! a tower is a kind of a circular journey, gallivanting from this here place to that are place, for a month or two merely, to pleasure it like."

"And pray what might you call pleasure, Mr. Smith?"

"Pleasure?" answered Smith, "vy I calls pleasure gitting up at six in a morning, and taking a dip into the sea, and then a hearty good breakfast of hot rolls and butter, and coffee and eggs."

"And what then?" said the little fat man.

"Vat then? you ere a bachelor too, and ask vat then? And all these ere beautiful nice, plump, dear lasses about?" But enough of these people, and now for myself. I was alarmed, about ten days ago, by the rupture of a small blood-vessel, which caused an expectoration of blood for two days. Being unwilling you, or my dear mother, should be at all alarmed about me, I would not mention this, till all these bad symptoms were removed completely, which is now the case. My physician tells me, such small vessels are of little consequence; and by avoiding over-fatigue, and taking care of myself, he has no doubt I shall get perfectly well. Indeed there is now nothing at all the matter with me, unless I attempt to walk fast; and then I feel a something like stagnation, and fulness about my heart, and my lips turn blueish. However, I both eat and sleep well, and I am told that when patients ask Doctor Baillie to prescribe for them, for any pain or ache, while enjoying these two advantages, the doctor loses patience and refuses to listen to them: et tant mieux! *I do not want to die, and go we know not whither, and lose sight of the bright sun for ever. I am not even ambitious of a show-death, to have my fortitude, or my sweet smile, or my calm courage, or my last prayers extolled. You know I am not in the least romantic; but I am attached to life, for my dear children's sake, and in a word, though it may be cowardly, yet I hope, and pray, that God will spare my life many years longer: but if he has willed it otherwise, I will try not to murmur at His decree: and I tell you, frankly, that my sins do not sit at all heavy on my conscience; because I never doubt the goodness of God. This is all very grave; but I am so seldom grave that you will forgive me.*

I shall write to you, my dear sister, again, very soon; but I will conclude now; because I am a little too serious: so believe me ever,

Most truly and affectionately yours,

FANNY PARKER.

When Lord Worcester had ascertained that Leinster was really safe on his journey to the continent, half wild with joy, he went and consulted Julia as to what she really believed was his chance of inducing me to go to Brighton. I had obtained his promise not to call on me, nor write to me, for at least three days after Leinster's departure.

"We shall only quarrel," said I to His Lordship, "if you come to me, rejoicing, as I know you will, at a circumstance which, no doubt, will affect me *pour le moment*."

I passed a melancholy evening, after Leinster had taken leave of me. He was to sail from Portsmouth. Should he be detained by foul winds, even for a single hour, he promised to write to me. The first day, I refused to admit any visitor, and on the second, after his departure, I received a letter from him, to acquaint me that the unfavourable state of the weather might possibly detain him a week or more at Portsmouth. My resolution was taken in an instant: which wise resolution may be learned from the following letter, addressed to my sister.

MY DEAREST FANNY,

Leinster is at Portsmouth, waiting for a fair wind to convey him to Spain. I am too melancholy to keep my promise of receiving Worcester's visits; and besides, being desirous of shaking hands once more with the poor Duke, you will believe me really, and in truth, very anxious to hear and see how you are, after the accident you have so long concealed from us. Therefore expect me almost as soon as my letter; and do pray be glad to see me.

I propose leaving London at eight o'clock to-morrow morning, till then, believe me,

Most truly yours,

HARRIETTE.

After dispatching this, and a letter full of excuses to Lord Worcester, I began to assist my maid Thérèse to prepare for my journey to Portsmouth on the following morning. We arrived in time for dinner. Fanny was looking better than usual. Colonel Parker was absent, and she was kind enough to invite the Duke of Leinster to dine with us. His Grace was very glad to see me, in his dry way; but it was impossible to avoid making such comparisons between my two young lovers as were most favourable to Worcester.

The Marquis wrote me immensely long letters every day; and though I expected Sunday would have been a day of rest, I was presented with a large packet, which Worcester had sent by the stage coach. He trembled lest I should be induced to accompany Leinster to Spain, and described the anguish and misery he had experienced, in learning from my servant that I had left London: for it was only on his return from my house that he had received my letter, acquainting him with my departure.

Fanny lived in a delightful cottage, surrounded with a large garden. There were two very pleasant women staying with her on a visit; it made me truly happy to see her so comfortable, and in such good spirits.

Fanny did not like Leinster, and I felt rather cooled and disgusted, when she forced on my attention his extreme selfishness in leaving England without inquiring at all about the state of my finances. Then, poor Worcester was, or seemed to be, so very unhappy about me; and I saw no chance of these boobies, Leinster, his brother, and Fitzgibbon, sailing, as the wind had not shifted the least in the world, during the ten days I passed at Portsmouth.

Leinster, much as he professed to esteem, respect, and love me, went out in a sailing boat every morning, instead of walking about with me. My pride took the alarm, and one fine morning, having previously arranged everything for my return to town, and taken leave of my sister, I coolly wished him *un bon voyage*, and, to his utter astonishment, jumped into the carriage which was to convey me to London.

I found a great many cards and letters on my table in town: a very kind one from Lord Robert Manners, another from Lord Frederic Bentinck, and, what was better still, another blank cover, directed to me, containing two banknotes for one hundred pounds each!

Julia called on me the morning after my arrival.

"Do go to Brighton," said she. "You will never find anybody to like you as, I am sure, Lord Worcester does. I really would not advise you, but that I think he deserves you."

"I will consider about it," said I, "in the meantime pray tell some news."

Julia declared she had heard nothing lately. "Amy," she continued, "has found out a lady who once had a slip with your favourite, Ward."

"What does she say of him?" I inquired.

"Oh, that he was all fire and ice. He declared, on going to bed, that he should require at least three additional blankets, which comfort he had scarcely enjoyed a quarter of an hour, before he swore he was in a fever, threw off all the bedclothes, and opened the windows; and then came on his ague fit again."

"Oh, the amiable creature!" said I. "And how does Lord Berwick go on?"

Julia told me that he was quite as much in love with Sophia as ever.

"And Sophia?"

"Oh, Sophia hates His Lordship, if possible, more than ever, and declares she will not go to Brighton unless you decided to accompany Worcester there."

We were now interrupted by a visit from Lord Worcester. I will not attempt to describe his rapture, or how violently he was agitated at meeting with me. My readers, besides accusing me of vanity, would not believe such exaggerated feeling as he evinced to be in human nature. In short, since there is nothing so uninteresting as descriptions of love-scenes, be it known that I was pressed by Julia, entreated by Worcester, and inclined by gratitude, being, moreover, in a state of health which required

nursing; therefore, without being in love, I agreed to place myself under his protection. It was a grievous sin, and every one of this kind counts, no doubt; and indeed, I almost fear the recording angel, as he mounted up to heaven with mine, so far from dropping a tear on it, to blot it out for ever, doubled this one, and so cried quits with my uncle Toby.

There certainly was much aggravation of sin, in my projected criminal intercourse with the Marquis of Worcester. Many women, very hard pressed *par la belle nature*, intrigue because they see no prospect nor hopes of getting husbands; but I, who might, as everybody told me, and were incessantly reminding me, have, at this period, smuggled myself into the Beaufort family, by merely declaring to Lord Worcester, with my finger pointed towards the North—that way leads to Harriette Wilson's bedchamber; yet so perverse was my conscience, so hardened by what Fred Bentinck calls, my perseverance in loose morality, that I scorned the idea of taking such an advantage of the passion I had inspired, in what I believed to be a generous breast, as might, hereafter, cause unhappiness to himself, while it would embitter the peace of his parents.

Seriously, I have but a very confused idea of what virtue really is, or what it would be at. For my part, all the virtue I ever practised, or desired to learn, was such as my heart and conscience dictated. Faith is virtue, the methodists will tell you; and for faith you must pray, morning, noon and night; because, without faith in a particular creed, your charity, and all your other good works, cannot save you from eternal torture!

"Madam," said I to an Irish dissenting minister's wife one day; "madam, not only there are certain things I do not believe; but, what is more, I have not even the wish to enforce the faith of them on my mind."

"Pray, then, that you may wish to believe."

"But I do not wish to pray to wish."

"Then there is no help in you"; said the dissenting minister's wife.

Now the English Protestant ladies' virtue is chastity! There

are but two classes of women among them. She is a bad woman the moment she has committed fornication; be she generous, charitable, just, clever, domestic, affectionate, and ever ready to sacrifice her own good to serve and benefit those she loves, still her rank in society is with the lowest hired prostitute. Each is indiscriminately avoided, and each is denominated the same—bad woman, while all are virtuous who are chaste.

In vain do my conscience and common sense point out to me, that virtue can alone consist in the sacrifice of selfish interests and inclinations to a sense of what is right, or an innate feeling of what is benevolent and good. The Protestant world will have it that all are virtuous who are chaste, even when chastity is to their liking, or when they are entirely destitute of affections or natural passion, or when they have vainly, though slyly, offered a commodity for the use and pleasure of any man who might require it, or when a woman has married the husband of her choice, who studies all her wishes—the selfish, hard-hearted, cruel mother, the treacherous friend, the unfeeling mistress—all! all! are called virtuous who are supposed chaste.

In Turkey, female virtue consists, as Lady Mary Wortley Montagu tells us, in losing no time, and being ever zealously employed in the pious work of increasing and multiplying.

The soldier's virtue lies in murdering as many fellow-creatures as possible, at the command of any man, virtuous or vicious, who may happen to be his chief, no matter why or wherefore.

The French ladies' virtue is, generally speaking, all comprised and summed up in one single word and article—*bienséance!*

Suppose we call it, *ça-et-là bienséance!*

It is a most prolific monosyllable, that same *ça;* only some people call it differently. However, to proceed with my story, for this same virtue and its attributes are puzzling me to death:

Viscount Berwick, in a magnificent equipage, drawn by four milk-white horses, or [illegible] of raven black, I forget which, led the way towards Brighton, followed by the more humble vehicles

containing his cook, his plate, his frying-pans and other utensils. Soon afterwards, Julia and Sophia started in a neat little chariot, drawn by two scraggy black horses, *parce que Mademoiselle Sophie vouloit faire paroitre les beaux restes de sa vertu chancelante*. Lord Worcester I sent down alone, that he might hire a house, and have everything in readiness.

"But if I once join my regiment, I shall not be allowed to return," Worcester observed.

"No matter," said I, "my maid and myself can find our way to Brighton with perfect safety."

"I can ride ten or fifteen miles to meet you," Worcester said, and having made me promise again and again, that he might expect me, at a certain hour, on a certain day, he took his leave, and also set off for Brighton.

"I have a great mind not to go," said I to myself, after Worcester had left me. However, my word was passed, and my maid had already begun to pack my trunks.

"Pray do not go," said my wild young tormenter, Augustus Berkeley, who came upstairs, without permission, just as we were ready to start. "I have so sworn to Worcester that you were not to be had."

I laughed.

"What do you laugh at, you tiresome creature?" asked Augustus.

"At your vanity, in supposing that none but the most immaculate could refuse you."

"Why, I am a better looking fellow than Worcester, at all events," said Augustus.

"True," I replied, "but then you do not like me half as well."

"All nonsense, nobody loves you better than I do, only I have the misfortune not to be a Lord."

"I have been at least as civil to you as I ever was to the Marquis of Sligo, the Prince Esterhazy, and many others."

"Well," said Augustus, "however that may be, I will never forgive you for going to Worcester."

"It is a very hard case," I observed; "but I cannot help it."

Augustus left me sulkily, and we were soon on our road to Brighton. I was just growing tired of my journey and of the society of my maid, who, probably, was as much bored with mine, since she had fallen fast asleep, when I observed the figure of an officer, or private, wearing some uniform which looked, at a distance, like that of the tenth Hussars, galloping towards us. As it approached, it grew a little more like the young Marquis, and yet, somehow or other, I could not reconcile it to my mind that he should wear regimentals. I had forgotten that circumstance, and felt disappointed. A gentleman always looks so much better in plain clothes. I was soon put out of suspense, by his kissing his hand to me.

Love is sharpsighted. In another minute or two the Marquis of Worcester was blushing and bowing by the side of my carriage. He told me that he had got a house for me in Rock Gardens, where he had left his footman, Mr. Will Haught, to get all square, that being the man's favourite expression. The said Mr. Will Haught was a stiff, grave, steady person of about forty. He always wore the Beaufort livery, which was as stiff as himself, and used to take his hat off, and sit in the hall, on a Sunday, with a clean pocket-handkerchief tied about his head, reading the Bible, offering thus, to the reflecting mind, these two excellent maxims: Respect God, but do not catch cold. I enter into all these particulars, by way of recommending him to Alderman Goodbehere (I think it was) who promulgated similar sentiments about a cold church, though I have, from a sense of propriety, omitted his first expletive epithet.

This Mr. Will was commander-in-chief of Worcester's servants. He had, indeed, been bred in the family, and was, I believe, the Duchess of Beaufort's footman before His Lordship was born, and though he wore a livery, he had since been raised to the rank of under-butler by the Duke of Beaufort. Why he was dismissed from that most honourable post, to follow the fortunes of his noble young master, I cannot tell; unless indeed Her Grace, touched and deeply impressed by the pious and respectful manner in which Will Haught was in the habit of

binding up his temples, on a Sunday, with his clean pocket-handkerchief, while reading the Bible, had employed him as a spy, to watch over the morals of her hopeful firstborn. Be that as it may, we found Will quite as busy in settling everything for my comfort, as though I had been the Duchess's chosen daughter-in-law, for whom he was making all square, upon the square, which means, I believe, in the way of honesty.

The coachman, Mr. Boniface, had also had the honour of driving the Duchess, in auld lang syne. We found him by no means so officiously polite and attentive as Mr. Will Haught: on the contrary, he was fast asleep, with his nice little *vieille cour* cotton wig all awry. We found a groom, in the Beaufort livery, at the door, waiting for His Lordship's horse, which he handed over, by the bridle, to the under groom, and the under groom sent a soldier with it to the stable.

What a bore it will be, to have all these lazy porter-drinking men in one's house, thought I, with very unmarchionesslike humility; but then I never set up for anything at all like a woman of rank.

Will Haught introduced my maid to a female servant, whom he had himself hired, and whom he desired to shew her mistress's apartments to my woman. As to Lord Worcester, he was so excessively overjoyed at finding all his fears and dread of losing me at an end, that the moment he could contrive to get rid of Will Haught, he pressed my hand first to his trembling lips, and next to his heart, and then he burst into tears! which he, however, from very shame, dried up as soon as he possibly could, and with the genuine feelings of affection and hospitality he asked me if, after the fatigue of my little journey, I should prefer passing the night alone?

"And where are you to sleep?" said I.

His Lordship informed me that he had a good bed in his dressing-room.

I then told him that, if he would permit me to pass this night alone, he would see me in excellent temper and spirits to-morrow. "At present everything is strange here, therefore, if I

am a little melancholy, you must not, my dear Worcester, fancy it proceeds from want of regard for you."

It was impossible not to be reconciled to Worcester, while he thus acceded to all my wishes, reasonable or unreasonable. A good lesson, this, for many a fool who thinks to win a woman's heart by crossing all her desires.

An excellent dinner was well served, and while we partook of it, His Lordship informed me that Lord Berwick, whom he always called Tweed, wished to have dined with us, accompanied by Sophia and Julia; but he had not ventured to invite them, without first ascertaining whether it would be agreeable to me.

Lord Worcester's fine person looked remarkably well in the elegant evening uniform of the tenth, and I was so touched and won, by being allowed to have my own way, with such perfect liberty, in the house of another person, that when he handed me to the door of my bedchamber, and there took a most tender and affectionate leave of me for the night, I was almost tempted to regret that I had expressed a desire to pass it in solitude.

"It is a nice room," said I, "and the fire burns cheerfully. Do you think there are any ghosts in this part of the world?"

Worcester, however, was too modest in his idolatry, and had too great a dread of giving offence to me, to take my hint.

He merely reminded me that he was close at hand; and I had but to touch my bell to bring him in an instant to my side.

The next morning I was awakened by Lord Berwick's odd voice, calling to Worcester: "I have brought you some prime apples, which came from my country house this morning, and Sophia wants you both to dine with me to-day: In short, she will not come unless you do."

I hurried on my dressing-gown, and assured Lord Berwick that I should meet her with pleasure.

Lord Worcester said that he ought to be at parade; but declared, no matter what might be the consequence, that he could not and never would leave me again.

After breakfast, his two grooms rode up to the door with

three horses: one of them was a delightfully quiet-looking lady's horse.

"Who is to ride that one which is without the saddle?" I inquired.

Worcester made Will Haught bring down from his dressing-room one of the most beautiful, easy side-saddles I ever beheld, richly embroidered with blue silk.

"Will you ride, Harriette?" asked Worcester. "If so, I hope you will approve of this saddle of my choosing, which shall always be kept in my dressing-room, that no one may use it, for an instant, except yourself."

We took a very long ride, and were joined by my former acquaintance Colonel Palmer, who pressed me, very politely, to accompany Lord Worcester to dine at the mess-rooms.

"Not to-day," said I; "certainly next week, with Worcester's permission."

Colonel Palmer fixed on an early day in the week, and kindly assured us he would get the mess-dinner kept back for an hour, knowing how fond Worcester was of late hours. He then ventured gently to hint something about Colonel Quintin's displeasure, at his having failed to attend parade that morning.

"I shall scold you," continued the Colonel, addressing me, "if this happens again."

Worcester and I rode about the country together, till it was nearly time to dress: the under groom, who was waiting at my door for my horse, held out his hand for my foot, to assist me in dismounting, while his master was taking leave of Colonel Palmer; and I was just going to accept his assistance, when Worcester, in much agitation, desired him to desist, and never attempt such presumption again.

I assured His Lordship that I should not like him a bit the better, for dirtying his hands, or his gloves, with my muddy shoes; but he was peremptory.

Lord Berwick treated us most magnificently; but Sophia, the gentle, dovelike Sophia, was become so very cross and irritable to His Lordship, that it was disagreeable to everybody present.

After dinner we played at cards; and when we had concluded one of the most stupid evenings possible, Worcester and I took our leave.

The next morning, Lord Berwick called on me, to entreat that I would consider my sister's welfare, and persuade her to place herself under his protection.

"The annuity I propose giving her," continued His Lordship, "of £500, shall be derived from money in the funds."

"And so you really are, at last, caught, my Lord," said I, "fairly caught in love's trap? Now I am rather curious to learn what particular happiness you expect to enjoy, with a girl who, though she is my sister, I may say, as you and everybody know it as well as myself, never showed any character but once, in her whole life; and that was in her unequivocal dislike of you?"

"I do not mind that," answered His Lordship, "and by giving her whatever she wants, she may perhaps get over her dislike."

"Is it her beauty, then, which has won your heart?"

"In part," answered Berwick; "but chiefly the opinion I have formed of her truth. I could never live with a woman whom I must watch and suspect. Now, I am disposed to believe implicitly every word Sophia utters."

"And with good reason," I interrupted him, "for I am convinced that Sophia seldom, if ever, tells an untruth; and certainly there is something very candid and fair in her unqualified acknowledgment of dislike towards you, since she is evidently fond of all the good things your money can buy, and I think she particularly likes a good dinner."

"And therefore," Lord Berwick resumed, "as her friend, you ought to advise her to come to me."

I told His Lordship that I really could not overcome my reluctance to interfere in such matters.

"I want her to decide," said his persevering Lordship, "that I may give orders about buying the lease of a house for her in town, and furnishing it."

In the evening we all went into Lord Berwick's private box at the theatre, and were very merry, with the exception of His

Lordship, who sat down, quietly, at the very back of the box, where he could neither see nor hear. Sophia did not once take the slightest notice of him. For my part, I asked him, several times, if he would not exchange places with Lord Worcester; but he assured me that he disliked seeing a play more than sitting in the dark.

"Sophia ought to chat with you, then, since she chooses to favour you with her company."

"Oh, I do not like to be talked to," said Lord Berwick.

Every morning of my life, I was entertained with His Lordship's prosing about Sophia.

"I do not think," said he, "that Sophia will ever, willingly, deceive me; but then Lord Deerhurst, Colonel Berkeley, or somebody or other, might force her, perhaps!"

On the morning of the day fixed on for our dining at the mess-room, Lord Worcester received a severe reprimand from Colonel Quintin, for neglecting the drill.

We sat down at least thirty at table, and I was the only lady in company. However, as I had my station near Colonel Palmer, and was not presented to any strangers, I enjoyed the same sort of liberty as I might have done at any *table d'hôte*.

I was already acquainted with the present Duc de Guiche, and several other officers. A very fine young man, who had joined only a month previous, was present, and I remember that nobody said a single word to him; but I have entirely forgotten his name. I inquired his history, and was told that he was a man of good fortune, but of no family, as they denominate those who cannot boast recorded ancient blood in their veins. However, instead of complaining to the Prince, or calling out the Colonel, he put a good face on the thing, and always came into the mess-room whistling. He was a very fine young man, and, while he carefully avoided any appearance of making up to his proud brother-officers, was ever ready to prove, by his politeness in handing them salt, bread, wine, or whatever happened to be near him at table, that he was not sufficiently wounded by their cutting to be sulky with them, neither was his appetite at all

impaired by it. Of this fact, nobody in their senses could entertain the smallest doubt.

The Duke of Clarence's and poor Mrs. Jordan's eldest son, Captain Fitzclarence, I remember, had a forfeit, or a fine to pay, for coming to dinner in dirty boots, or something of that kind. He was indeed voted, by the whole mess, a very dirty fellow in his person, and one who evidently conceived himself so much the better than his brother officers, from being the bastard of the Duke of Clarence. Everybody acknowledges him to be brave; but I certainly should take him to be about as heartless as any man need be, in order to make his way in the world. He had a trick or two which used to make the officers sick, and he ate so voraciously, that he well nigh bred a famine in the mess-room. On one occasion, poor Captain Roberts, who happened to come in later than Fitzclarence, got nothing but bubble-and-squeak, in the dog-days.

Colonel Palmer scolded me very much indeed about Worcester's missing parade of a morning. I assured him that I had done and would do all I possibly could to make him more attentive. The Colonel declared that, if he again missed the drill, he feared Colonel Quintin would act in a way to disgust Lord Worcester with the army altogether, and he should regret, much, his going out of the regiment.

As soon as we had left the mess-room, I told Worcester that he really must be at parade, by eight o'clock to-morrow.

Worcester again promised, and again broke his word, for which he was immediately put under arrest, and desired not to wear his sword.

"By G——, if he vas de king's son, I vould put him honder arrest," exclaimed Quintin.

This was reported to Lord Worcester, who said it was the most vulgar and disgusting speech he had ever heard: adding, "What has a king's son, or a duke's son, to do with the usual discipline observed towards lieutenants in the army?"

When Colonel Palmer came to condole with Worcester, His Lordship was a good deal agitated and confused. I passed my

word to the Colonel that, if he would get Worcester's sword restored to him, I would accompany him to drill, rather than he should miss it. The next morning, I actually accomplished being up, dressed, and on my road to the barracks, by half-past eight o'clock, accompanied by Worcester.

Will Haught, who was in a terrible bustle on this occasion, asked, "Where is Miss Wilson to wait during parade, my Lord?"

"In my barrack-room," said the Marquis.

"Why, my Lord, there is nothing at all in it but a large trunk, and, you see, the room has never been put square like, and I should have wished to have got Miss Wilson a neat comfortable breakfast."

"Well, do your best," said Worcester, as we drove off.

I found Lord Worcester's barrack-room in a dismal state. However, though it was quite impossible for Mr. Will Haught to make all square, yet he procured absolute necessaries for my breakfasting every morning at the barracks. It was quite as much as we could possibly do, to get dressed in time for parade; and breakfast at home was wholly out of the question.

Behold me, now, regularly attending parade, like a young recruit, dressed in a blue riding habit, and an embroidered jacket or spencer worn over it, trimmed and finished after the fashion of our uniform, and a little grey fur stable-cap, with a gold band.

From the window of Worcester's barrack-room, I used to amuse myself reviewing our troops, but not after the fashion of Catharine of Russia. Sergeant Whitaker, teaching the sword exercise, used to amuse me the most. It began thus:

"Tik nuttiss! ! the wurd dror is oney a carshun. At t'wurd suards, ye drors um hout, tekin a farm un possitif grip o'th' hilt! sem time, throwing th' shith smartly backords thus! Dror! !" Here the men, forgetful of the caution which had just been given them, began to draw. "Steady there! ! Never a finger or a high to move i'th' hed. Dror! ! suards! !"

This said Sergeant Whitaker was a highly respectable man, no doubt, only rather solemn-looking or so; but that was all the

better, perhaps, as it inspired more respect among his motley pupils.

I fancy it was the sight of Worcester and me together, so Darby and Joan-like, that first put the good soldier in mind of matrimony. He certainly did cast many a long glance after us, as we used to drive out of the barrack-yard. One morning, in particular, he made a full stop, when close to us, and his lips moved as though he had been about to address us, if Worcester's haughty glance had not frightened away his speech and made him, on second thoughts, honour us with no more favours than a mere military salute.

"There is something on Sergeant Whitaker's mind," said I, and Worcester laughed heartily at the idea.

We continued punctual at parade for more than a fortnight. Some of Worcester's friends generally joined us on our way from the barracks, to which place I frequently rode on horseback, when the weather would permit.

Young Edward Fitzgerald, who is a cousin of the Duke of Leinster, on one occasion galloped after us, and addressed Worcester: "What do you think? there is a d——d old gallipot-fellow, has been gossiping about you, and tells everybody he meets the story of your being put under arrest, and having your sword taken away from you, for making such a fool of yourself about Harriette."

Worcester, reddening with indignation, said, "I must take the liberty of acquainting you, Fitzgerald, that the lady you call Harriette, I consider as my wife; and when I assure you that you will wound and offend me, if ever you treat her with less respect than you would show to the Marchioness of Worcester, I am sure you will desist from the familiarity of calling her by her christian name."

Fitzgerald, goodnaturedly, assured him he had spoken with his usual thoughtlessness.

Worcester now inquired who had been making so free with us.

"Why, that stupid old Doctor Tierney is the man," answered Fitzgerald.

Worcester said he should call on him, to desire he would hold his tongue.

"And," interrupted Fitzgerald, "confine his attention to his draughts and pills."

Worcester asked what sort of a man Tierney was, and if at all like a gentleman.

Fitzgerald did not recollect to have seen him.

I assured them I had known him of old, and that he attended me when I lived on the Marine Parade. He was a pedantic, disagreeable, affected fool, who visited his patients in leather breeches and topped boots. He had formerly made sentimental love to my sister Amy, when she came over from France. She passed herself off on the amorous doctor *comme une grande vertu*, on purpose to laugh at him. As to his vulgar wife, she was ugly and unattractive enough to disgust a man with the whole fair sex, since such unfair things formed part of it.

Lord Worcester, on that very day, I think, accompanied by the Duc de Guiche, but I am not certain whether it was His Grace or another officer of the tenth, paid his visit of ceremony to Doctor Tierney. I cannot repeat the conversation which passed, but I know the substance of it was that Worcester requested that he would not make his actions the subject of conversation; but mind his own business, supposing he had any to mind, and, if not, he had better advertise for it, instead of publishing anecdotes of persons with whom he was not likely to have the slightest acquaintance.

The doctor, as Worcester and his friend both assured me, duly apologised for having indulged himself in using the name of a marquis, in common with thousands of low-minded persons, who always love to talk of the great, and promised to do so no more.

Some time after this, I received a long letter from my sister Fanny, to acquaint me with the absence of Colonel Palmer from Portsmouth, on particular business, and of her intention of passing a month with me at Brighton: it being nearly five weeks since she had become the mother of a lovely little girl, and her

physician having recommended the bracing air of Brighton for the recovery of her strength.

This was delightful news to me, and put me in high spirits, as well as Julia, who loved Fanny better than ever she had before imagined it possible to love one of her own sex. Worcester also looked forward to Fanny's proposed visit, with much satisfaction, as he had always, he assured me, felt the affection of a brother towards her.

Fanny's arrival was a holiday for us all. Lord Berwick hoped much from her extreme good nature and obliging disposition. Sophia, between Julia, Fanny and myself, was the more certain of not being left *tête-à-tête* with her nightmare, Lord Berwick, and Julia, whose very friendship partook of passion, shed tears of joy when she pressed her friend to her heart. My affection was calm, for it was fixed, and shall be eternal, if eternity is to be mine, with memory of the past.

Fanny declared we should all become good horsewomen before she left Brighton. She was, herself, a most beautiful rider. Accordingly, the morning after her arrival beheld a cavalcade about to start from my door in Rock Gardens: it consisted of Lords Berwick and Worcester, Mr. Fitzgerald, two young dragoons, whose names I have forgotten, Julia, Fanny, Sophia, and me. Lord Berwick was too nervous to trust himself on horseback, except on very great and particular occasions. I found much amusement in tickling up my mare a little, as I rode it close to his horse, in order to put a little mettle into them both. It was rather wicked; His Lordship declared he was not frightened for himself, but only for Sophia.

Lord Worcester took the opportunity to give Sophia a few instructions about holding her whip and bridle. Suddenly, when we were at least five miles from Brighton, Sophia quietly walked her horse towards home, leaving us to proceed without her.

"What can be the matter with Sophia?" we all inquired at once.

Fitzgerald feared he had said something to offend her.

Lord Worcester and Fanny galloped after her, to ascertain what was the matter, and how she expected to find her way home alone.

"Oh, nothing is the matter," said Sophia, very innocently, "nothing whatever is the matter, only he will go this way," alluding to her horse.

Lord Worcester's natural politeness was not proof against this, and he laughed loudly, as he led Sophia's horse towards the rest.

The whole party dined at my house, and Lord Worcester did the honours of the table with infinite grace.

When the ladies withdrew from the room, they had a thousand questions to ask each other. Fanny took upon her to say to Sophia that she conceived she was treating Lord Berwick very ill, in accepting so much from him, unless she meant to live with him.

Sophia began to cry, and I to laugh. Julia showed us some very romantic love-letters from Napier, whom she shortly proposed joining in Leicestershire.

Sophia, at Fanny's persuasion, now began to waver.

"Come," said Fanny, "what does it signify to you whether your lover is old or young, handsome or ugly, provided he gives you plenty of fine things; since you know you are the coldest girl in all England, and never felt a sensation in your life?"

"What do you call a sensation?" Sophia asked.

"Why," said Fanny, "I know you feel exactly the same in the society of men, as in that of women."

"How do you know?" continued Sophia.

"Well then I do not know," said Fanny; "so I beg you will tell us, and describe to us accurately, any symptoms you may have felt, bordering on passion or love: the latter sounds most amiable."

"Why, once," said Sophia, laughing.

"Once what?" Julia interposed.

"Come," said I, drawing my chair towards the fire, "let us hear all about your once."

"Well, then," resumed Sophia, "well, then; but you will all promise not to tell?"

"Nonsense; who should we tell?"

"Well, then, you all recollect the handsome young cobbler, who lived in Chapel Street——"

"The cobbler! !" we both exclaimed, laughing.

"Yes, you may recollect, I used to get my shoes made by him."

"Well?"

"Well. I used to think the cobbler very handsome. Ah, you may laugh, all of you; but there is no answering for one's taste, you know. In short, I was incessantly calling on him with some excuse or another, such as asking how my shoes went on? or when they would be finished? and, when they were sent home, I used to carry my old ones to him, to ask if they were worth mending. One evening, when it was nearly dark, he ventured to press my hand, as he handed me my shoes. This I believe was done in trepidation; but I felt it very pleasant. Finding that I did not resent this first liberty, he began to kiss me, and I was so ashamed, I knew not what to say or how to push him away."

"What next?" cried we all three, eagerly drawing all our chairs nearer to her, and laughing.

"Why," said Sophia, blushing and hesitating, "why, oh, but the next thing was very nasty indeed!"

"What thing do you mean?"

"Why, a very shocking one."

"How do you mean, shocking?"

"Come, out with it," said Julia.

"Out with it, indeed"; Sophia repeated, with a deep blush.

"Good heavens! surely he did not, you do not mean to say that the cobbler actually did. . . . ?"

"Upon my word he did. . . ." answered Sophia.

"And was it on this memorable occasion, and this only, that you boast of having felt a sensation?" I inquired.

"Why, I never felt so oddly before."

"Mercy on me, and what did you do?" asked Julia.

"Oh, I was running out of the shop with my face and neck as red as scarlet; for you know I was scarcely thirteen years of age."

"And what prevented you?"

"Why, the cobbler; who took hold of my hand, and told me I had no call to be afraid of touching him, for he was quite clean."

We could scarcely ask her what happened next, being absolutely convulsed with laughter.

"Oh, nothing else," answered Sophia; "for I got away as fast as I could; but then it was more than a week before I could get the cobbler out of my head: however, it really will be a great shame if you mention this to Lord Berwick."

Fanny declared she would not miss hinting it, delicately, to His Lordship, for a hundred *louis d'ors*.

The gentlemen soon after came upstairs. However, all Fanny could relate publicly was, that Sophia, in her earliest youth, had had *une affaire du cœur* with a cobbler, and Lord Berwick declared he would never rest till he had heard all about it. Before the evening was over, His Lordship was led to hope, from what Sophia said, that, if he were to furnish an elegant house, she might, probably, be induced to inhabit it, with His Lordship, sooner or later.

Some few days after this important business was decided, and Lord Berwick had written to his agent in town, to engage a comfortable residence, in some airy situation, as Lord Worcester and I were returning home from our ride, we met the brave Sergeant Whitaker, who, this time, was not to be brow-beaten from his purpose by Worcester's proud salute.

"My Lord," said he, coming up close to Lord Worcester's horse, and touching his cap, "my Lord, if you please, I wants to be married."

"What the devil is that to me?" Worcester observed.

"Why, my Lord," continued the sergeant, looking sheepish, "you see, if you would just mention it to Colonel Quintin."

"Very well," said Worcester, "provided it is my business, which is what, I confess, I was not aware of."

"Yes, my Lord, it is your business, I assure you, or I should not have gone for to take this here liberty."

"That is enough," said Worcester, and we rode on.

The Duc de Guiche and Fitzgerald joined us, and while we were conversing together, the young cornet galloped past us: I allude to the one who had been universally cut, ever since he joined, merely, I believe, because no one knew him, and all were certain that his birth was rather mechanical. The young man rode a very fine horse, and appeared to manage him with tact and spirit. I think his name was Eversfield, or something a good deal like it.

"What a beautiful horse that lad is riding!" said the Duc de Guiche!" I wish I knew whether he would like to sell it, and what he would ask for it?"

"I have a great mind to gallop after him and inquire," observed young Fitzgerald.

"Pray do not," said Lord Worcester, "as he will certainly be offended. It will, indeed, be much too cool a thing to do, to a stranger to whom none of us have yet spoken."

"Oh, never mind," said young Fitzgerald, "he is a good-natured fellow, I dare say. I spoke to him yesterday, to inquire who made his tilbury": and off he galloped after Mr. Eversfield, who, in less than a fortnight from this time, became on excellent terms with them all: which proves that, with perfect evenness of temper, and good-nature combined, a man of high independent spirit cannot fail to gain the goodwill of everybody around him.

In about a month or six weeks, Lord Berwick had fitted up a very nice comfortable house for Sophia, in Montague Square, and Sophia, after obtaining His Lordship's promise that she should sleep alone, at least for the first week or two, accompanied His Lordship to London.

A few days after their departure, Worcester was again addressed by the amorous sergeant: "My Lord, respecting my little private affair—I should be much obliged to your Lordship if you would be so good as for to take it in hand."

"Certainly," said Worcester, galloping off, to avoid laughing out loud in the man's face.

Meeting Colonel Quintin on our way home, Worcester, to get the sergeant's little affair off his mind, rode up to him, and, after saluting him, he, in some confusion, mentioned that Sergeant Whitaker wanted to be married, very bad, provided the Colonel should not object to it.

"You moste inquire de caracter of de yong voman," said Quintin, shrugging up his shoulders.

"I, sir! !" exclaimed Lord Worcester, in evident surprise, which proved his ignorance of military duties.

"Yez, my Lord," continued Quintin, "I sall trouble yow to make de moste strict inquiry about de yong voman; and partiguler, vor her morals."

Worcester bowed, and rode towards home.

CHAPTER XIV

It is impossible to do justice to all the delicate attentions I received from Lord Worcester, during nearly three years. They never relaxed; but continued to the hour of our parting, exactly as they had begun. One day, when I was obliged to have a back double-tooth drawn, he turned as pale as death, being absolutely sick with fright: and long afterwards, he always wore the tooth round his neck. If, for only ten minutes, he lost sight of me, by my walking or riding on a little faster than himself, he was in such agonies that, as I returned, I was addressed, continually, by private soldiers of the tenth, who assured me, my Lord was running after me all over the country, in much alarm; and when, at last, he overtook me, his heart was beating in such evident alarm as was, even to me, who had been tolerably romantic in my time, almost incredible! He flatly refused every invitation he received, either to dinner parties, balls or routs, and, for more than six months, he had not once dined away from me. His uncle, Lord Charles Somerset, who, I believe, then commanded the district, was growing very angry, and threatened to inform his brother, the Duke of Beaufort, as he feared we were really married. It was, as Lord Charles said, ridiculous, in a man of Worcester's high rank, to seclude himself quite like a hermit. "At all events," continued the worthy uncle, "I hope you will not fail to be here on my birthday, next week." Lord Worcester promised to make an effort for the birthday, while he frankly told Lord Charles that he should be always miserable, in any society, without me.

When Worcester returned home, and related the conversation to me, I begged and entreated him to comply with his uncle's desires, as to his birthday, at least.

"My dearest Harriette," said Worcester, "having bound myself to you for my life, for better or worse, and with my eyes open, I feel that we two make but one, in our faults, and I hate to go to any place, where you may not accompany me." I assured him that I had no desire to be invited, because I had no longer health to enjoy society; and, in short, I would not rest till I had obtained his promise that he would attend his uncle's engagement.

When the day arrived, Worcester said he could not endure my dining alone with that stiff Will Haught, who would not know how to serve me with what I liked, standing behind my chair.

"Well, then, you shall give me my dinner first," I replied.

For this purpose, I dined earlier than usual. As soon as I had finished my dinner, I gave him a gentle hint.

"You have no time to lose. Your pretty new yellow boots, with the rest of your magnificent, full dress regimentals, Will Haught has spread out, to great advantage, in your dressing-room, *et vous serez tout rayonnant! !*"

"And why am I to be dressed up, there, while the person for whom alone I exist, or wish to live an hour, is left in solitude? Why am I to be a slave to Charles Somerset? I will not go, let the consequence be what it may," said Worcester.

Worcester's carriage now drove up to the door.

"My Lord, you have not a minute to lose," eagerly spoke Will Haught.

"Put up the carriage, and bring me some cold beef," answered His Lordship.

"What will you say to your uncle?" I asked.

"He be hanged!" was the reply.

At past ten o'clock, Lord Charles sent down a groom, on horseback, to inquire for Worcester, and state that the ladies waited for him to take his part in the quadrilles, which he had studied, for that night.

Worcester ran up into his bedroom, and called out, from the window, after putting on his nightcap, that he was ill, and in

bed, and desired he might not again be disturbed at so late an hour.

It would be tedious to attempt relating all, or even one twentieth part, of the tender proofs of love and affection which Worcester was in the daily, I may say hourly, habit of evincing towards me. His Lordship has often watched my sleep, in the cold, for half, nay sometimes during the whole of the night, sitting by my bedside, rather than risking to disturb me by coming into it. On an occasion when I was induced to consult a medical man about a trifling indisposition, which was not in the least alarming, Lord Worcester wrote the doctor a most romantic letter, inclosing a fifty-pound note, and declaring that his obligation to him would be eternal, if he could contrive to be of the slightest use to me. He would send fur shoes and fur cloaks after me, in hot dry weather; because one could never be certain that it would not rain before my return. He took upon him all the care of the house, ordering dinner, etc., from having once happened to hear me say that I did not like to know, beforehand, what I was to eat; and always used to lace my stays himself, and get out of bed to make my toast for breakfast, with his own hands, believing I should fancy it nicer and cleaner, if the footman had not touched it.

When the Prince Regent, who then commanded the regiment, came down to the Pavilion, Worcester was in despair; for he saw no possible means to avoid visiting His Royal Highness. The dinner, which was given expressly for the officers of the tenth Hussars, he was obliged to attend. On that occasion, which was the first of his passing an evening from home, after giving me my dinner, he sighed over me, when he took leave, as though it had been to go to the Antipodes.

Lord Worcester's rapture, on his return, knew no bounds. "My dear Harriette," said His Lordship, "the Prince's band, at the Pavilion, was so very beautiful, that it would have been impossible for me, who love music to excess, not to have enjoyed it; therefore, as I abhor the idea of enjoying anything on earth of which you cannot partake with me, I went into a

corner, where I was not observed, to stop my ears and think only of you. I must now tell you that the Prince has given me a general invitation, to go to him every evening, and I have settled my plan to avoid it. I intend to sham lame, and practise it at home, till I can limp, very decently and naturally, and then I will wait upon His Royal Highness and tell him that I have a sprain, which keeps me in constant pain, and confines me to the house.

Worcester began to practise, on the spot, and being, in all things, a most excellent mimic, particularly when he took off Lord Charles Somerset, or His Lordship's brother, whom he always called Cherry-ripe John, why, I know not, for the man is as pale as a ghost.

On the following day, Worcester limped famously, although he had nearly betrayed himself, by finding the proper use of his legs, from very *ennui*, when he was for the third time addressed by Sergeant Whitaker, on the Steyne, respecting of his little private consarn.

"How am I to inquire the character of your sweetheart, for God's sake?" Worcester asked the sergeant, with much ill-humour.

"Why, my Lord," answered the man, "you will please to inquire of Dr. Tierney, as she has been living in his family, as cook, my Lord."

Lord Worcester immediately paid a visit to the doctor, from whom he learned that the young woman was clean, honest and trustworthy.

"Sir," said Lord Worcester, as soon as he could find Colonel Quintin, "I have inquired the character of the young woman, and she is very good, sir."

"Good? for what, pray?" asked the Colonel, forgetting all about Sergeant Whitaker's little private consarn.

"Oh, sir," continued Worcester, almost ready to laugh, yet in some confusion, "she is good, sir, I believe, for everything; at least, Doctor Tierney says she is a very steady, clean woman."

"And vat sal I do vid dis clean voman, vat you talk to me about?" asked the Colonel, impatiently.

"Oh, sir, you are not to do anything with her; only you desired me to inquire the character of the young woman Sergeant Whitaker wishes to marry."

"Ah, true—reight—vel—veri vel vel, I have no objecshuns, only tell him he is von great fool to his pains."

Away galloped Worcester, quite delighted to get rid of the sergeant's little private consarn.

"My Lord, I wants, very bad, to be married," said Sergeant Whitaker once more, a few days after Worcester had obtained the Colonel's permission.

"Colonel Quintin has no objection," answered Worcester, and the Sergeant respectfully begged leave to return His Lordship ten thousand thanks.

"But the Colonel says you are a great fool for your pains," added Worcester.

"That is no odds, my Lord," replied Whitaker, as he saluted Lord Worcester, and then hastened back to his fair one, in order to acquaint her that his little private affair was arranged, and just as it should be.

On s'ennuie de tout! In the course of time, I grew tired of this *tête-à-tête*, particularly as Worcester shewed symptoms of sulky displeasure whenever any of the officers wanted to join us in our rides. On two occasions he was furious! Once was, when Colonel Palmer kindly assisted me off my horse; another, when he learned that I had sent a little note to that gentleman, about borrowing a book, or some such trifle. Finding that this circumstance weighed on his mind, in spite of all I could say or do, I dispatched a second note to this effect:

DEAR COLONEL PALMER,

I believe you have a real friendship for Worcester, who has taken it into his wise head, to make himself perfectly miserable about the forlorn note I wrote to you. Candour I conceive to be the best cure for jealousy; so do pray come to us this evening, and show Worcester my two notes.

Yours, dear sir, very truly,

H. W.

Down came Colonel Palmer, trotting on a little ugly pony, his laced jacket covered with an old, short, brown, great coat, and a shabby round hat, while the rain was dripping down his face.

"My dear fellow," said the Colonel, "I would not, for worlds, spoil your comfort. I have loved, myself, and know what jealousy is. I shall be wretched, if——"

And he bustled about, to search for my notes, while his nose was so red, and the worthy man looked altogether so consolingly ugly, so like a disguised second-rate harlequin, with the silver lace occasionally glittering, as one caught a glimpse of it under his little old brown coat, and then such a thing on his head, doing duty for a hat!

Worcester burst out a laughing, in the midst of the Colonel's most energetic defence.

"I beg your pardon, Colonel Palmer, upon my honour I do; but you really look so very eager, and so very odd and serious, in that little tight old coat and hat, that for the life of me I cannot help laughing."

Palmer, however, continued, as energetic as ever, till he had received Worcester's assurance, upon his honour and soul, that he was quite satisfied.

"Then do come and ride with us, Colonel Palmer, to-morrow," said I, "since Worcester is satisfied that you have no designs against his happiness; for, really, we have had such a long *tête-à-tête*, we have not a word more to say to each other."

Worcester still declared that his confidence in us both had never been shaken, only he was melancholy to think that I grew tired of our *tête-à-têtes*, while, for his part, he never desired nor conceived any more perfect happiness than passing every hour in the day alone with me.

In spite of my gratitude, which he yet believes in, because I proved it, not only in words but by all my actions, yet I did want a little varied society, that I might not fall into a lethargy; so, when Fanny went to join Colonel Parker in town, I begged hard for, and at last obtained, a week's permission of absence, from one who could refuse me nothing.

"You shall go, at all events, and I know I can confide in your honour," said Lord Worcester; "but I will not despair of obtaining leave from the Colonel to accompany you."

The better to effect his purpose, he went to Quintin with a box of cigars under his arm. Quintin accepted the cigars with perfect good will; but in answer to His Lordship's next request, for leave to pass a week in town, the answer was——

"No! no! my Lord, you must drill."

Worcester had a great mind to have asked him to return the cigars. Nevertheless, he kept his promise of permitting me to accompany my sister Fanny to London.

We found Sophia established in a nice house in Montague Square, which Lord Berwick, or rather his upholsterer, had furnished with much taste.

Nous lui demandâmes si elle faisoit, encore, lit à part?
Elle répondait que non.

"And what sort of a man is Lord Berwick?"

"Oh, he is a very violent man, indeed."

ophia insisted on Fanny remaining her visitor for a week, h invitation, as Parker had no fixed residence in town, she accepted. Sophia had at her command a very handsome age, in which we all three drove out on the day after my l.

called on sister Paragon, whom we found greatly ed.

What is the matter?" we both asked at once.

h," said Paragon, "do you hear the screams of that t?"

Yes, how shocking! It is not one of yours, however," said I, as I counted her pretty little family, who, as usual, were all seated close to her side.

"They proceed from my landlady's child, whose mother insists I have half killed it, and that it never was in such pain before. In short, she declares she apprehends a convulsion fit."

"Why, what can you have done to the poor child?" Fanny inquired.

"I merely administered one of Inglish's excellent aperient Scott's Pills to the dear infant," Paragon replied, calmly.

"This perfectly accounts for all these cries," Fanny observed, and further declared that she had herself been put in perfect torture by the only one she had ever swallowed.

"Do you presume to judge of Inglish's Aperient, who have swallowed but one?" said Paragon, with dignified contempt; "why, it requires at least fifty boxes of it to pass downwards, before you can properly decided on the merits of this invaluable medicine! In the meantime, the bowels must be severely pinched into obedience. Everything depends on the force of habit. Now there is my little Mary, for instance, the dear little child has become so accustomed to a pain in her bowels, that if, by any accident, I put her to bed without a Scotchman, she always awakes in low spirits."

"Nevertheless, you must excuse my ever swallowing another, to the end of my natural life," said Fanny.

Paragon advised her to make her will, assuring her that she would answer for the life of no person who had not learned, by habit, to digest a Scotchman. "Read what King Charles said of them," continued Paragon; but Fanny declared that not even King George himself, with the opinions of all the Spartans and philosophers to boot, should make her believe that pain was no evil, however people might be accustomed to it.

From Paragon's we drove to Julia's. She told us that she had made Lord Berwick pay her down several hundred pounds in ready money, for having interceded with Sophia and persuaded her to live with him.

"Well," said I, sighing, "you have a large family, and I suppose it is what we must all come to. However, I conceive myself, as yet, rather too young to take up this new profession of yours, Julia."

Julia defended her conduct, by assuring me she had not taken it up but for my sister's real interest: as a proof of which, she declared that she had strong reason to believe it was Lord Berwick's intention to marry Sophia.

Sophia said she would not have him.

"And why, pray?" we asked.

"Because," said Sophia, "because——I think it will be very shocking to swear never to have but one man."

I observed to Sophia that, perhaps, she would swear faith to her cobbler, by that sole in which consists a cobbler's sole hope, much more willingly.

"Oh," said Sophia, "I am very sorry I told you of my affair with the cobbler."

"Of his affair, you mean," I remarked.

"Nonsense," continued Sophia; "I shall never hear the last of it, as long as I live: for Julia has not only acquainted Lord Berwick, but she has made it out worse."

"I do not know how she could manage that," said Fanny.

We all dined in Montague Square. Lord Berwick appeared to be perfectly happy, although he scarcely ever opened his lips; but the little he did say was chiefly on the subject of cuckolds and cuckolding. His Lordship was horn-mad. He wondered how many men had been cuckolded that season, in London, without knowing it? He wondered, if a girl like Sophia was to be forced into the sin of adultery, some day, by some naughty man, whether she would bury the sad story in her own breast.

I assured him I neither knew nor cared.

After having been dumb for at least a quarter of an hour, Lord Berwick, *àpropos* to nothing, burst into a loud laugh.

"What on earth are you laughing at, Lord Berwick?" Sophia asked, very crossly.

"My own thoughts," answered His Lordship.

"And what were they, pray?" I inquired.

"Only something that happened to come across me," said His Lordship.

We all insisted on knowing what had come across him.

"Why," said Lord Berwick, "I was just considering, to myself, what a remarkably serious face Joseph always has, in the pictures; a sort of unhappy physiognomy, as if he were saying to

himself, it is all very well! Have you ever remarked this, Miss Wilson?" said His Lordship.

"Heavens forbid! why do you address yourself to me?" I asked.

"Joseph looks," continued Lord Berwick, without attending to my pious answer, "Joseph looks as if he thought it all mighty fine."

"How wicked!" said Fanny, trying to give a serious expression to her arch laughing blue eye.

"Horrible!" said Julia, drawing up her long, thin throat.

For my own part, I laughed loudly and unequivocally; for which impious sin, I hope I did, for I know I ought to have fasted long, and prayed longer still: but Lord Berwick had such a ridiculous way of saying these sort of things! !

"What has become of Lord Deerhurst's valuable jewels?" said I to Sophia, by way of changing this shocking conversation.

"Oh, dear me, I entirely forgot my jewels."

Lord Berwick earnestly entreated to have a sight of them, and was greatly amused at the charming proof of simplicity his beloved had evinced, in mistaking such leaden trumpery for valuable trinkets. Sophia begged to be allowed to return them to Lord Deerhurst, with a polite note, and Lord Berwick having presented her with writing materials, she wrote as follows:

Sophia presents her compliments to Viscount Deerhurst. Has the honour of returning him his valuable jewels, with due thanks, and all the gratitude that he has a right to expect from her.

Montague Square.

The jewels and letters were sealed up, and despatched to the noble Viscount, on that very evening.

After dinner, His Lordship's discourse turned on marriage: the pith, meaning, and spirit of which, was to show cause why Sophia ought to become Lady Berwick. He could never rest, till he had made the excellent, deserving Sophia, his lawful wife.

Sophia again declared she would not have him; but before I left the house, she was graciously pleased to say that she would give the subject due consideration.

"You need not be afraid of it, my love, it is very clean," said Lord Berwick to Sophia, observing that she examined her coffee-cup with some little suspicion. Of course, His Lordship alluded to the cobbler's affair.

"This house is so beautifully fitted up, even to the very attics, that it would be quite a pity to leave it," said Fanny.

"It cannot be helped," replied Lord Berwick, "we must sell it; for, of course, Lady Berwick must inhabit my family house in Grosvenor Square."

Sophia began to cry again.

"Oh, do not be so terribly alarmed," Miss Fanny remarked, "for I believe Lord Berwick is only joking; he would scarcely place at the head of his house and table a girl who had, of her own free will and consent, kept company with a cobbler."

"Oh, but then you know, Sophia, the cobbler, and everything belonging to him, was very clean," I observed.

Sophia declared we were all a set of nasty things, and, snatching up her taper, she retired to her dressing-room in a pet."

The next morning I received a very long letter from Lord Worcester. He acquainted me, after three pages, full of deep regret at my absence, that his virtue had been in the most imminent danger, from the very active attempts of the paymaster's wife, of the tenth.

The story was this: the paymaster was a man of very savage temper. On the day I left Brighton, Lord Worcester happened to join him, on horseback, when he was riding with his young, frisky wife. Worcester, with his usual good breeding, had addressed himself, several times, to the lady, who, in return, it appears, had ogled Lord Worcester, unperceived by anybody in the world, except her good man, who had the impertinence to grow angry: when, being at a loss how to vent his fury on the spot, he tickled his wife's mare behind, in a way which, he knew well, would cause her to rear and plunge. The animal, so far from disappointing his hopes, we will, out of charity, suppose, rather exceeded them; since, but for the immediate protection

and active support of Lord Worcester, at some risk to himself, the paymaster's wife would have been thrown over the cliff.

Lord Worcester, as a mere man, putting gallantry out of the question, could not have done less than afford every assistance to a young woman, under circumstances of such imminent danger. This fair lady, however, made up her mind that she had achieved a desperate conquest over the heart of the young Marquis.

The better to secure her prize, she, on her return home, composed a very pretty little pathetic effusion, beginning somewhat thus:

Could I, dear Lord Worcester, receive your tender kind attentions, without emotion? The soldier, who is to put this note into your hand, you will find trustworthy. At dusk, we may contrive to meet, just behind the barracks, any day when my husband is dining at the mess, etc.

Lord Worcester was so very inattentive as to take no notice of this broad hint from the paymaster's wife, who repeated it, in still broader terms, the following day; declaring that she would throw herself on his honour and humanity, to allow her to meet him, on his way home from the barracks, just behind a certain hill, as soon as it was dark, merely to advise her how to escape the much-dreaded violence of her husband.

Lord Worcester must inevitably pass the appointed spot, on his way home from the barracks; he therefore determined to take that opportunity of informing her, once for all, that he was steadily attached to me, and me only, for the rest of his life: but he was ill prepared for the desperate attack which was, on that evening, to be made on his passions and his virtue. His Lordship, after having fully explained his feelings and situation to the paymaster's wife, naturally relied on her pride for obtaining his immediate *congé*, but he knew not what he had to deal with. The mother of this said most amorously-disposed paymaster's wife, had seduced the *accoucheur*, while in the very act of bringing this fair young lady into the world. For this wicked

act the poor *accoucheur* had, it is said, paid damages, and further, the injured husband had confined his frail *moitié* in a madhouse ever since.

Many people have expressed their surprise at his present majesty having knighted this said cruel husband, the reputed father of Worcester's heroine; but the king conferred this dignity on him at least three hours after he had dined; which may, in some measure, account for it. Not that I mean, positively, to assert that the king was drunk, though I am as likely to write my real thoughts of the king as of any other man, leaving it to the learned in the law to determine whether we can be obliged to waive all frankness with regard to our king.

The fact, however, is, I happen to love my king, and I always did so; and when, as Prince of Wales, we might all say what we thought of His Royal Highness, there is no man existing, nor woman neither, who can accuse me of ever having once said the contrary. I do not mean to say that I could not put down a long list of his faults; but I think the good predominates, and I am a steady faithful subject of His Majesty.

Worcester's fair heroine, who first saw the light in such an amorous moment, had been desperate all her life, and might have said, with Smith the haberdasher, that it was the worst of her, she had never been able to keep her hands off a fine young man.

"Oh, dear Worcester, do not say we are to part thus, never to meet again! I have never loved till now! Do kiss me! Pray do!"

"Since you really do love me," said Worcester, "I am bound, by gratitude, to prove my esteem for you, by insisting on your return home to your husband."

The heroine became still more demonstrative of her love! It occurred to Worcester, by this time, that there was a plot in all this, to obtain heavy damages from him; and that idea, added to the strong affection he certainly then entertained for me, made him ice itself, and he left the young lady near her door, to sing willow! willow! willow!

It was a great bore, but there were finer young men in her husband's regiment than Worcester, and so, rather than die of grief, the lady tried them all!

No matter. She certainly sighed for Worcester during more than six weeks after my return; but of this, more bye-and-bye.

After relating this story, Lord Worcester went on to abuse his uncle, Lord Charles Somerset, for his malice in having written to His Grace of Beaufort on the subject of our connection, in a way to alarm him excessively. Worcester, in consequence, received very severe letters, both from his father and mother, insisting on his immediately leaving me, unprovided for, and without the smallest ceremony. These harsh, unfeeling letters excited in Worcester a spirit of defiance, such as mild remonstrance never could have produced. He repeated his solemn assurances to me, that no power on earth, not even my inconstancy, could destroy his everlasting attachment, or induce him, however it must destroy his repose, to leave me. He deeply regretted his not being of age, that he might immediately make me his wife, and then nought could separate us save death. He reminded me that the period of his becoming of age was not very far distant, and, in the meantime, if they pressed him, our marriage was not impossible. He begged his most affectionate regards to his sisters, Fanny and Sophia, and implored me, unless I would for ever destroy his happiness on earth, to promise to become his wife, and remain with him for ever, etc.

I immediately answered Lord Worcester, begging him not to irritate his parents unnecessarily. I did not touch on the subject of our marriage; but desired him to rest satisfied with my faith, and that I would never, willingly, cause him a moment's pain, while I had reason to believe in his affection.

In conclusion, I informed him that he might expect me at Brighton, without fail, in three days from the date of my letter.

Amelia was now living very near my house, in town, and as I really wanted to see the handsome young Campbell, I availed myself of her invitation to a small party, before I left town. I ventured to return home from her house at about eleven o'clock

at night, alone, because the distance was very trifling; but the moment I had left my sister's door, I observed a tall, dark, and somewhat, as I thought, wild-looking young man, following me. I felt unusually alarmed, and trusting to the lightness of my heels, I began to run as fast as I possibly could. The man kept up to me, by running also. I had not felt so frightened for some years, and dared not look back, till, absolutely breathless, and ready to sink on the steps, I knocked loudly at my own door.

The man, who was close behind me, had never once opened his lips. His dress was respectable, and his features were rather handsome. He had an immense quantity of curly, wild, black hair, which fell remarkably low about his eyes and throat. His countenance was very dark, and as pale as death. It was impossible to observe the expressive singularity of his eyes without terror: they seemed to look straight forwards, at something beyond what others could see. It struck me that he possessed supernatural quickness of sight, while, at the same time, he appeared blind to the objects immediately surrounding him. When I first observed him, he stood beneath a bright lamp, and I shall never forget the impression his countenance made on me. I had no manservant in town: my *femme de chambre* was the only human being I had left in the house.

No sooner was the door opened, than I was closely followed by this horrible man, who closed it after him, without having spoken a single word. I apprehended that he might be a robber, who proposed cutting my throat on my very first attempt to give alarm or call for assistance.

I am a notorious coward while looking forward to any danger; but I will do myself this justice, that, whenever it is, or appears, actually before me, and past all remedy, except such as I have to hope from my own exertions or presence of mind, I then become armed with such a decided character of courage, as would not disgrace my friend Wellington himself.

When my dumb tormenter had forced himself into my house, and banged-to the street door, my nerves became all braced by desperation, and my ideas were clear and collected. If I am to

die, God forgive all my faults, said I, mentally; but I will live on, if I can: and I fixed my eyes, for an instant, on the man of terror, to try to read his designs. The odd, quick, black, eye, fixed on nothing but air, however, left me doubtful. One thing only I had decided upon, from the very first moment, that to accomplish an intrigue was not his object in following me. He did not attempt to pass upstairs without me, but stood, waiting my decision, with his back leaning against my street door. He is either a maniac, escaped from confinement, or a robber, thought I, and, in either character, I take it for granted, he conceals a sharp knife or dagger about him. If a robber, he will stab me, if I make a noise, or desire my maid to call for help. Madmen, on the other hand, are generally cowards to those who act with firm courage.

Now to decide, thought I, fixing my eyes on the man once more. It must end in a guess after all.

This glance took in the man's whole person, as well as his face. The latter appeared to be of wonderful muscular strength; but his bones were well covered with fat, which methought did not look much as though he had been leading the vagabond life of a housebreaker. His clothes were good, and seemed to have been fairly worn. From his person, I once more raised my eyes to his face. The cunning fearful expression of those wild black orbs decided me—he is a madman, and about to strangle me: and my only chance is in affecting to be one of his keepers.

"Follow me, Sir!" said I, fiercely.

The man followed slowly, and meekly into the drawing-room, where he stationed himself near the fireplace, with an air of indecision, nor once attempted to approach me.

"The gentlemen who are here to attend on you, will be downstairs in half a second," said I, seating myself quietly near him, and taking up a book, as if, God help me, I could distinguish a line of it.

Then I addressed him in a whisper, "They are coming; you have, perhaps, yet time if you wish to escape them; the street door is unbarred; but you have not a second to lose, they are

going to put on the chain." The man, without having uttered a single word, darted furiously downstairs, and when I heard the street door slammed with violence after him, joy, or I know not what, overcame me, and I fainted.

This adventure hastened my departure for Brighton, where I arrived a day sooner than the one on which I had led Lord Worcester to expect me. Worlds could not have tempted either me, or my *femme de chambre*, to have passed another night alone in that house. Lord Worcester was overjoyed beyond description at my unexpected return. He would not enter into my idea, as to the man who had frightened me away from London, being mad.

"Why then, was he so awfully dumb?" I asked, "and why did he not approach me?"

Worcester declared, if he could once find him, he would make him speak, and holloa too; but this, from the muscular strength of the stranger, I much doubted. However, there was little probability of His Lordship's discovering who or what the man was; and in a few days the subject was not spoken of, though for years I remembered it with feelings of horror.

The next day, as we were riding together over the Downs, I saw a deserter taken; and was so affected with the poor wretch's look of distress, as to burst into tears; at which Worcester and Fitzgerald laughed heartily.

This, however, did not prevent my writing a laboured letter, which had cost me three copies, to try to melt Colonel Quintin's heart in his favour. I could not help fancying, as the man was led past us, handcuffed, that the expression of his countenance might be interpreted thus, when he fixed his eyes on my face:

"Lord Worcester will sit on the court-martial which will decide my fate. You can do much with him; so have pity on me."

I saw a tear in the corner of the poor youth's eye. He could not brush it off with his hands, poor fellow, they being pinioned. It was a fine clear day; and the sun shone brightly on the sorrowful captive's face, as though in mockery of his distress: and I am

to be pampered, and indulged in every wanton luxury of life, while my miserable fellow-creature, merely for having sought that liberty, so dear to all, is to be bound and lashed, till he faints under the cruel torture; and Worcester, the tender, soft, luxurious Worcester, shall have a voice against him!

Worcester appeared to indulge me, in what he evidently considered my excess of weakness, merely because he was passionately in love with me, though he did not, in the least, sympathise in my feelings: and yet he had seen no war, to harden his heart against the sufferings of his fellow-creatures! I remembered to have heard told, in the regiment, of the young cornet, whom everybody had cut, having nearly fainted, the first time he saw a man flogged, yet nobody ever accused this youth of want of spirit or mettle. I had never liked Worcester so little as on that day. Not being personally acquainted with Colonel Quintin, and knowing that he was rather unfavourably disposed towards me, from an idea that I prevented Worcester from attending to his military duties, the letters I addressed to him were anonymous. I, of course, entertained few hopes from an anonymous epistle; but it was the best I could do for the deserter. I never acquainted Lord Worcester with the circumstance of my having addressed Colonel Quintin on this subject.

As soon as I had secretly dispatched my letter, it was time to go to the barracks, where I had received a particular invitation from Colonel Roberts to dine, Palmer being absent. It was on a Sunday, and as we passed through the hall, we saw Will Haught, dressed up in his usual sabbath costume, with a yellow handkerchief bound tight round his head, *à l'ordinaire*, whenever he read the Bible.

"Good heavens," said I to Worcester, "what a fright the man makes of himself! Why, I should think he would be more angelic in his pretty silver-laced hat." This was very wicked, perhaps; but, as the sin of such a harmless remark does not strike me, I am not ashamed of repeating it.

Cornet Eversfield looked exactly as usual: the only difference I observed in him was, that he had left off whistling, and for a

very simple reason, I imagine, that of having discovered amusing companions in men who had previously thrown him entirely on his own resources, *pour passer le temps.*

The next morning, Monday, Worcester was obliged to attend the court-martial which sat to try the poor deserter. I absolutely refused to leave my bed on that morning.

Lord Worcester informed me that he, the Duc de Guiche, and——but, as I am not certain, I will not name the third, had sentenced the man to receive five hundred lashes! !

"And what says Colonel Quintin?" I asked, eagerly.

"I have just seen the Colonel," answered Worcester, "and acquainted him with the sentence."

"Well?" I exclaimed in much anxiety.

"Why, Colonel Quintin has astonished us all, by declaring that he should not inflict one quarter of the sentence pronounced by the court-martial against the young soldier."

"What reason did he give?"

"Merely," answered Worcester, "that the man was young, in the first place, and, in the second, that he hated the system of flogging altogether, believing it to be a punishment most of all calculated to harden the men."

"I will forgive Colonel Quintin his dislike of me, for that one sentiment," said I.

In order to quiet the anxiety of the Duke of Beaufort, I absolutely insisted on Lord Worcester going, occasionally, into society; but when he did comply with my earnest desire to this effect, he always left me with the reluctance of a schoolboy on setting off to his dull, dry, daily school.

One day, when Worcester dined with Lord Charles Somerset, he said that several carriages would be passing my door, on their way from his uncle's, so that he should not require any equipage of his own to return in. It was a rainy, wretched night, and I was greatly surprised when Lord Worcester, in his full dress regimentals, without a cloak or a greatcoat, came home on foot, absolutely wet to the skin!

"Lady Aldborough offered me a seat in her barouche," said

Worcester, "and we were, altogether, six, just about to drive from the door, when that widow, Lady Emily——, I forget her other name, who everybody says is dying for a husband, begged that we would make room for her too, and she got into the coach without waiting for an answer. 'I must not crowd you all,' said Her Ladyship; 'indeed I prefer sitting on Lord Worcester's knee, to putting the ladies to the least inconvenience.' "

Worcester's virtue having taken the alarm, he insisted on its being quite impossible for him to intrude an instant longer, and rather than submit to such contamination as to consent that a fine woman should sit on his knee, he preferred submitting his best and gayest uniform to the pelting storm; and for which want of gallantry, he was rated by Lady Aldborough for the next fortnight.

A few days after my return to Brighton, Worcester put into my hand another romantic effusion from the paymaster's little impudent wife, whose want of pride disgusted me infinitely more than her want of chastity. For four more successive days, Worcester received the most ridiculous professions of the fiercest passion, written in a beautiful hand, on the best vellum, and sealed with Cupids, hearts, darts and heaven knows what besides. These soft communications were slyly put into his hand by a little drummer, during parade.

Being really bored by her perseverance, I addressed the following cooler to her.

MADAM,

It is not my fault that you are treated so cruelly by Lord Worcester; for I gave you a fair chance of working on his affections, when I went to London. You must therefore, by this time, be convinced that, pour le moment au moins, *the case is hopeless. If, in your extreme distress, I can afford you any consolation, you have only to speak. Shall I forward you a lock of his hair? or get his portrait copied for you? Further I cannot do, myself, you know; and with regard to all your effusions, though they serve me excellently well for* papillotes—àpropos, *where do you contrive to*

get such delightful soft paper?—still, I cannot be so unfeeling as to recommend your giving yourself the trouble of composing any more nonsense, since it merely serves for my use and amusement.

I have the honour to remain, etc.,

H. W.

To my great astonishment, I received a very polite answer from the amorous paymaster's wife. Heaven forbid that she should cause any jealous pangs in my breast! She had never thought of injuring me, having been led to believe that I had left Lord Worcester, etc.

I answered this letter thus:

MADAM,

There is not the least danger in the world of your having the power to injure me. Lord Worcester, even if he had forsaken me, would, I know, like to chose his wife or mistress himself, instead of having one thus forced on him. I merely thought it fair to acquaint you, before you had wasted all your beautiful soft paper, that Lord Worcester was in the habit of bringing every one of your effusions to me, without reading them, or even breaking the seals. If, after this information, you choose to continue, croyez-moi, cela m'est parfaitement indifférent.

Yours, obediently, etc.,

H. W.

The paymaster's wife sent me such a tender answer to this, my second harsh note, as almost led me to believe that she had some idea of transferring her affections from His Lordship to myself. *Do pray allow me to make your acquaintance, my sweet young lady, if only to ask your pardon. I am ill, seriously ill, with the violence of my feelings. Yes! ! I have loved Worcester! ! that dear, noble-looking being, who saved my life, which else had been sacrificed to the rage of that brute, whose name I bear: but, oh! !*

However, my readers will excuse the rest of these ohs! and ahs!

I showed the rhapsody to Worcester, who put it into the fire,

voting the paymaster's wife the most disgusting bore, in the shape of a woman, he had ever met with.

"But she is so young," said I, "and you acknowledge that her husband is a drunken brute; suppose we go and call on her, together, this evening, merely to ascertain the real state of her health?"

Worcester never refused to comply with my slightest wish. We found her in bed. She possessed what the French term *la beauté du diable*, namely, youth, and a particularly youthful appearance. I should, in fact, have guessed her under sixteen, had I not been previously assured that she was on the wrong side of nineteen. I was disgusted with the expression of her eyes. It was that of studied, or rather, uncurbed desire. There was nothing soft or voluptuous in their character. The very ne plus ultra of her ambition appeared to be that of exciting young men's animal passions.

I could not see such cold depravity, in one who almost looked an infant, without feeling the interest I had been disposed to entertain towards her considerably diminished. I was not prepared to see her, from a sick bed, leering lasciviously at Lord Worcester before my very face; and when she languishly called him, dear Worcester! he did not attempt to conceal his displeasure.

"There is no woman on earth, by whom I wish to be called dear Worcester, with the exception of Harriette and my mother," said His Lordship; "and I confess I am a little surprised, that you should condescend to treat me as your lover, who am almost a stranger to you."

The paymaster's wife begged pardon of us both, and thanked us for inquiring after her health.

We paid her but a very short visit; and, in less than a month afterwards, the paymaster's wife had divided the love which had been all Worcester's, equally and fairly between the brave officers of the tenth Hussars! !

Vive l'amour et le sentiment!

We continued some time longer at Brighton. The Duke

appeared somewhat appeased at learning that Worcester went a little more into society; perhaps from an idea that he was growing tired of me, or may be he had discovered that mild measures had most effect on his son.

In spite of all I could say or do to prevent it, Lord Worcester got horribly in debt. He was naturally extravagant, and everybody cheated him. As for myself, I might have been welcome to have brought away, in His Lordship's name, at any time, as many diamonds as either Wirgman or any other jeweller would have given him credit for; and yet I can say with truth that I never accepted a single trinket from him, in my life, except a small chain, and a pair of pink topaz earrings, the price of which was, altogether, under thirty guineas. I even did my best to prevent his buying these, which were brought to me, as the man said, by the desire of Lord Worcester, merely to inquire if I liked them. His Lordship being from home, the man said he would call for them when he returned.

When I saw Worcester, believing it was not too late to return the trinkets, and knowing him to be very poor, I told him that I never wore such things, and should esteem it a favour if he would not buy them. His Lordship assured me that it was now too late to return these; but I never suffered him to buy any more.

With regard to our house expenses, I could have regulated them for, at least, half the cost; but Worcester absolutely refused to allow me to trouble my head about them. Once I did venture to remark, when he was about to borrow a thousand or two, at enormous interest, that since the pious Will Haught always carried out of our house daily provision not only for himself, but his wife, and put down, in his pious accounts, more porter than any man could drink in his sober senses, I did not exactly perceive the fun or amusement of paying him very high weekly board-wages; but Worcester having slightly hinted this circumstance to the holy man, he cried and blubbered till he was almost in hysterics, and I declared myself quite unable to contend with a footman of such fine nerves. Still it provoked

me to see the man, to whom I was bound, by gratitude, for his apparent devotion to me, teased and dunned to death, when I knew everything might have been made all square by proper economy; but it is really incredible how young, careless noblemen are used, between their tradespeople and their servants.

When the Duke of Beaufort discovered at what interest Lord Worcester was borrowing money, he threatened the money-lender with prosecution for fraud on a minor, if he did not sign a receipt in full for the bare sum lent; and these terms were accepted.

All this might be very pretty, and very fair; still my own opinion is that a bargain is a bargain. A man tells Worcester that he may have a thousand or two, on certain terms, or he may apply elsewhere, or go without it, whichever he pleases. Lord Worcester, who was nearly of age, and of very mature manners, obtained the sum, to take up a bill on which, as he declared to me, his father's credit depended. We cannot take upon ourselves to say that the lender did not put himself both to trouble and inconvenience, in order, at a very short notice, to put the desired amount into Lord Worcester's hands; then, when His Grace of Beaufort's credit had been preserved by his son's punctuality, his most honourable Grace takes advantage of the mere accident of his son wanting a few months to be of age, to make him break his solemn word of honour, pledged to one who had relied on that honour. Yet the Duke of Beaufort passes for a very honourable man! !

Now, as we are upon honour, I cannot avoid mentioning the very dead set which was made on Lord Worcester, about this time, by the Honourable Martin Hawke, to induce him to play. As well might he have endeavoured to move rocks and mountains, and make them dance quadrilles at Almacks! which proves to us that, where one passion is strong enough in the breast of a man, or a woman, to occupy his whole soul, he becomes dead, of course, to every other.

The opera season had begun, six weeks before, and I had engaged a very desirable opera box; but nobody cares for the

opera the first six weeks of the season; and we who are very fine generally lend our boxes to our creditors, or our *femmes de chambre*, till about March or April. We were, however, tired to death of Brighton and old Quintin, and Worcester was waiting and watching for a good opportunity to address Quintin on the subject of leave of absence, having predetermined to cut the army altogether, in case he was a second time refused.

"I never meant to make the army my profession," said Worcester to me one day," neither did my father desire it; but he conceives that every young man is the better for having seen a year or two of service. I had no decided objection to a little active service, as I hope, sooner or later, to prove, with your permission; for again and again I swear to be governed by that only, for ever and ever, so help me God! etc. My object in teasing and hurrying my father, as I did, to purchase a commission, I frankly tell you was because, since my figure is better than my face, I hoped the becoming uniform of the tenth would render me a little, though a very little, more to your taste!"

"There!" said Worcester one morning to me, as we were riding past the barracks, "look at that young soldier: if you pleaded for him, and shed tears at the idea of his being flogged, jealous and mad as I should have been, I must have applauded your taste."

I assured Lord Worcester that his sarcasms could not wound me, on a subject where my heart so entirely and decidedly acquitted me; and I set about my examination of the man, whose beauty was to wash away all the sins any of our frail sex might be inclined to commit with him. He wore the dress of a private of the tenth Hussars; his age might be three or four-and-twenty; his height full six feet; and he was just as slight as it was possible to be without injury to his strength, or the perfect manliness of his whole appearance. His person appeared to me, at the first glance, what Lord Worcester afterwards assured me it was generally allowed to be, by the whole regiment—faultless, and moulded in the most exact symmetry! It reminded one of

strength, activity, and lightness, all at once. His feet and hands were peculiarly small, taper, and beautiful. In short, persons, at first sight, were generally too much struck with this young man's person, to pay any particular attention to the beauty of his countenance, taking it, I suppose, for granted, that Nature had not been so peculiarly lavish of her kind favours as to have awarded such a head to such a body. The man was so much accustomed to see people stop and look at him, that he merely smiled, not affectedly, but with an appearance of good nature, joined to some little degree of archness.

Worcester called the man to his side, that I might judge of this celebrated model, who had even attracted the admiration of majesty. His Royal Highness, the Commander, having taken much notice of him; and Colonel Quintin, being really proud of having such a magnificent-looking being in his regiment, always made him come forward alone, before the troops, that he might be the more conspicuous. The soldier, by his deep blushes, I fancy, rather guessed Lord Worcester's motive in speaking to him.

Nature, determined, for once in her life, to show the world what a man ought to be, had given the soldier the finest, full rich, soft tone of voice which could well be imagined. He could neither read nor write, yet, either this man was naturally a gentleman, or his perfect beauty made one fancy so; for it was impossible to think him vulgar. His hair, which absolutely grew in full ringlets, was of the very finest silken quality. It was not quite black, for there was a rich glow of dark reddish brown on it: then for his eyes—it was almost impossible to ascertain their exact trait, they were so bright and staglike. I pronounced them decidedly purple, and was laughed at for my pains; but there was nothing equivocal about the colour of his teeth—two even rows of pearls, not too small. His mouth, around which many a dimple played, was large enough to add to that manliness of expression for which he was so celebrated. There was a peculiar character about the upper lip; one might have imagined that it quivered with the ardour of some warlike

command, just delivered; but then the under lip was so brightly red, and pouting, it ought to have been a woman's. His skin, of the very finest and most delicate texture, was pale, clear, and olive coloured; but he was always blushing. His moustachios, of which he was not a little proud, were like the hair of his head. There was much about the face of this young man which, reminded one of Lord Byron; and yet, beautiful as he was, like His Lordship, supposing him to have been of the same rank in life, he would never have inspired me with passion. This, however, was very far from being the case, generally speaking. Many stories of his prowess, and of his conquests, were in circulation.

The Duc de Guiche mentioned to us one day, at dinner, having met the handsome hussar, unusually smart, and much perfumed, just as he was stepping into a post-chaise. His Dukeship insisted on knowing where he was going. The man hesitated, and appeared in much confusion; but the Duke was peremptory.

"My Lord——a lady——" said the soldier at last, deeply blushing.

"If that is the case," said De Guiche, "remember to bring back some positive proof of the lady's approbation; the honour of the regiment is concerned, mind."

The man, on his return, produced a twenty-pound note!

The hussar spared no pains to set off his beauty. He had often been accused of curling his moustachios, but he steadily denied it, and referred his accusers to the persons most likely to have discovered the secrets of his toilette. Rouge he certainly did not wear, for he was always pale save when he blushed. He was an idle fellow, and often neglected his business in the stable. Once the officer of his troop threatened him with a court-martial; but when Colonel Quintin heard of what was in agitation, he lifted up his hands and eyes, as he said—"Oh, mine Got! ! How voud it be in possibility to flock such fine fellow as dat? and such goot-tempert fellow too! !"

One morning, about a week after our meeting with the

handsome soldier, I was a good deal affected by witnessing, from my window, the simple procession which was passing.

"There goes a poor soldier to his last home," said my maid, who happened to be sitting in the room with me.

The atmosphere was dense and heavy, while the rain fell in torrents on the heads of the mourners, and the wind whistled mournfully among the trees.

"He hears it not, poor fellow!" said I, "nor wind nor weather can disturb him more!"

As they passed on slowly, by my window, I observed that the funeral was attended by one of the officers of the tenth Hussars, to which regiment the dead soldier had been attached. I looked again. It was the Marquis of Worcester, and then I recollected his having mentioned something to me, in the morning, about having a soldier's funeral to attend. His Lordship looked unusually melancholy, and for my part, though I always considered this a mournful sight, I had never been so affected by a soldier's funeral until now.

"It is the dull weather which disorders our nerves," said I, brushing away a tear. "What is all this to me? Men must die, and worms will eat them."

I was going from the window, when my attention was arrested by the sight of a wild, beautiful young female, who rushed on towards the coffin. Her hair was dishevelled, and her eyes so swollen with tears that one could but guess at what might, perhaps, be their natural lustre.

Will Haught, at this moment, brought in my breakfast.

"Do you know anything about this funeral, or that poor young female who has just followed it?" said I to him.

"It is the beautiful young soldier, who died two days ago, of a brain-fever, Madam. That girl's name is Mary Keats. She was his sweetheart, and he loved her better than any of them great ladies as used to make so much of him."

This man had stood before me, with all his godlike beauty, but a few days past! Methought I yet saw that mantling blush, and the fine expressive curve of that quivering lip!

Feeling the tears again rushing to my eyes, I ran out of the room.

When I returned to the drawing-room, Lord Worcester was sitting, in a very melancholy attitude, leaning on his hand.

"What are you thinking about?" I asked.

"Why, I was considering, suppose it were my next turn to be cut off, thus suddenly, in the flower of my youth, that I should not like it!"

There was something so very comical and natural about what Worcester said, that melancholy as I was, and little as his speech seems of the risible kind, it certainly much amused me for an instant.

His Lordship looked at me in surprise, and declared that he was astonished at my want of feeling.

I assured him, with truth, that I had been most particularly shocked by Will Haught's account of the young soldier's death.

The man, as I learned from Worcester, while in the stable, two days after we had seen him, complained of a pain in his head, and applied for leave to go immediately to the hospital. From his unusual paleness, he was admitted at once. Worcester visited him on the following evening, and found him raging under the influence of a brain-fever. The muscles and veins of his finely-turned throat were all swollen, every nerve was agitated, and his heart and pulse were beating so violently that the former was visible at a distance. The man, one might have fancied, was endued with a double portion of life, energy, and animal strength. His late pale cheek was now flushed with a bright crimson glow, and the disorder of his fine dark auburn ringlets seemed but to increase that beauty which could not easily be disfigured. As the poor young maniac struggled and wrestled in the arms of the men who vainly endeavoured to confine him by means of a straight waistcoat, he offered some of the finest models for the statuary's art which could well be conceived. His beauty, as I have been told by several who

witnessed this poor youth in his last moments, acquired a character of more sublimity from the disorder of his brain; and all that supernatural, glowing ardour, that immense bodily strength, the youthful fire of that sweet countenance, the eye which flashed such wild indignation on his tormentors! that frame, like quicksilver, sensitive in every nerve and fibre! the boiling blood rushing through those veins! all this was to become a mass of cold, senseless clay before the next resolving sun!!

CHAPTER XV

In a few days after this event, we were on our road to London, where I soon learned all the most minute particulars of my sister Sophia's marriage with Lord Berwick, from Fanny, who, with Colonel Parker, was still in town. Sophia, I am sure, never had it really in her contemplation to refuse so excellent a match; yet she had, for several weeks, delayed the ceremony, merely, as I imagine, for the honour and glory of having it said of her, afterwards, that Lord Berwick had obtained her fair hand, not without difficulty. The thing had struck Fanny in the same light; and therefore, in the view of hastening what certainly was a desirable event, she, one day, remarked to Sophia, that she had observed a degree of coolness in His Lordship's manners for several days past, and that she really fancied he was considering how he should get off the marriage honourably.

Sophia reddened in evident alarm.

Fanny affected not to have remarked her sister's anxiety. "It is lucky, my dear Sophia," she went on, "that you do not wish to be Lady Berwick, otherwise this change in my Lord's sentiments might have caused you the greatest misery."

"Oh, no; not at all; not in the least, I assure you," hastily answered Sophia.

"My dear," continued Fanny, "why do you take such pains to convince me of what you know I have never had cause to doubt? On the contrary, since I have now such good reason to believe that the match has become equally disagreeable to both parties, I propose, in order to spare your pride the slightest wound, you commission me to declare off for you, in the most decidedly unequivocal terms, declaring in your name that you

will leave him for ever, on the very first moment that he renews the disagreeable subject."

"Why no——I think——you had better——better say nothing about it," said Sophia, with ill-disguised anxiety and evident confusion.

"Why, pray?" inquired Fanny, affecting surprise.

"Why——why——the fact is, it would seem——"

"What would it seem?"

"Seem——seem——so very ungrateful."

"Ingratitude is, to be sure, a heinous sin," said Fanny, shaking her head and laughing incredulously.

The next day, Lord Berwick received Sophia's permission to write to her father, stating his wish to become his son-in-law, and further begging my father to be present at the ceremony, which, with his permission, was to take place on the following day, for the purpose of giving his daughter away, that fair lady being under age.

My father was a proud Swiss, rather unpopular, and a deep mathematician. We were never, in our youth, either allowed to address him, or speak in his presence, except in low whispers, for fear of driving a problem out of his head. He valued his sons according to the progress they made in that science. For the girls he felt all the contempt due to those who voted *x* plus minus *g* a dead bore.

He was remarkably handsome, with white teeth, expressive eyes, and eyebrows which used to frighten us half out of our senses.

Lord Berwick, as well as many more, has often declared himself to have been much struck with that noble air for which my father was particularly distinguished.

The good gentleman was, of course, flattered, on his own account, and probably thought, with the man in Bluebeard, that

> 'Tis a very fine thing to be father-in-law
> To a rich and magnificent three-tailed Bashaw.

But I do not mean to say he did not rejoice in his daughter's

welfare for his daughter's sake too, as that would be to decide harshly of any father, much less of my own. We will therefore, take it for granted that, on this day, at least, *monsieur mon papa trouvait d'une forte belle humeur;* nay, my little sisters have since informed me that, when one of them, having had the misfortune to upset a box full of playthings, which made a violent noise in the room where he was, as usual, puzzling over a problem, just as they expected little short of broken heads, and were all running into the most remote corners of the room, until of the opposite wall they seemed a part, he surprised them, to the greatest possible degree, by saying, "*N'importe, petits imbeciles, venez m'embrasser!*"

Sophia was to be married at St. George's Church.

My father had a neighbour, who once insulted him with remarks about the profligacy of his daughters, and though the man had made very humble apologies, and my father had shaken hands with him, yet he never forgot it. This neighbour was a tradesman in a large way of business, and who lived in a very respectable style of comfort. He had several daughters, the ugliest, perhaps, that could possibly come of one father. There was no such thing as getting these off, anyhow, by hook or by crook, by the straight paths of virtue or the intricate road of vice. Not that I mean to say the latter had been attempted; but of this I am certain, if it had been, it must have been ineffectual.

On the eve of Sophia's marriage, as soon as my father had received Lord Berwick's polite invitation, he went to pay his good neighbour a visit.

"How do you find yourself this evening, my very excellent neighbour?"

"Purely, purely, thank you."

"And your amiable daughters? Any of them married yet? Any of them thinking of it, hey?"

G—— shook his head. "Husbands, as you well know, are not so easily procured for girls of no fortune."

"Indeed, Sir, I am not aware of any particular difficulty. You know my daughter Paragon has long been respectably

married to a gentleman of family; and, as for my daughter, Sophia, I shall, please God I live, witness her wedding to-morrow morning, before my dinner."

"Who is she to marry, pray?" asked G—— with eager curiosity; and which my father answered by putting Lord Berwick's letter into his hands, to his utmost astonishment; and, before he had at all recovered from his fit of envy and surprise, my father took his leave, saying that he had many preparations to make for the approaching marriage.

The next morning, as my father was stepping into the carriage which was to convey him to Lord Berwick's house, in Grosvenor Square, well dressed and in high spirits, he was gratified by the sight of his neighbour, who happened to pass his door at that very moment.

This man, naturally envious, and having hitherto looked down with pity on my father's misfortunes in having such handsome daughters, or, at least, he affected to do so, although in his heart, perhaps, he had not despised his children the more, supposing it had been the will of heaven to have bestowed on them countenances less forbiddingly ugly, this man, I say, could not, under the pressure of existing circumstances, help giving some vent to his spleen, exclaimed—"Don't hurry! don't break your neck!" and then passed on, ashamed, as well he might be, at the littleness of his envy.

Just before Sophia's marriage, Lord Berwick spoke to her, to this effect:

"My beloved Sophia, you are about to become an innocent, virtuous woman, and therefore you must pass your word to cut your sisters dead, for ever, and at once. I allude, particularly, to Fanny and Harriette."

"Yes——certainly——very well," was Sophia's warm-hearted answer.

"And you will oblige me by neither writing to them, nor receiving any letters from them."

"Very well; then I will give them up altogether," said Sophia, with much placidity; and yet we had never been, in the slightest

degree, deficient in sisterly affection towards her; and Lord Berwick expected to inspire, with affection, this heartless thing who, for a mere title, conferred on her by a stranger she disliked, could at once forget the ties of nature, and forsake for ever, without an effort or a tear, her earliest friends and nearest relations; and not because she was more virtuous than they were, since, on the contrary, she had begun her career before other girls even dream of such things. She had intruded herself on the cobbler at thirteen, thrown herself into the arms of the most disgusting profligate in England at fourteen, with her eyes open, knowing what he was; then offered herself for sale, at a price, to Colonel Berkeley, and when her terms were refused with scorn and contempt by the handsome and young, she throws herself into the arms of age and ugliness for a yearly stipend, and at length, by good luck, without one atom of virtue, became a wife.

This, from me, may appear, to strangers, like personal pique; but all who know me will acquit me of having ever, in my life, coveted the society of fools. I certainly, being naturally affectionate, should never have been induced to forsake my own sisters, while they were kindly disposed towards me; and, in short, had a man to whom I was to be married, requested any thing so unnatural of me, I should have disliked him, ever afterwards, for the wish, so far from complying with it. Yet I do feel irritated against Lady Berwick, I confess it; but it is for her slights, or what I fancy was her neglect of my dear departed mother. As for her having forgotten me, our indifference being mutual, I am no longer at all disposed to find fault with it. I should in like manner have ceased to love my mother, had she but felt it in her power, or had it for an instant, been in her contemplation, to forsake me for ever.

Nothing particular occurred on the day of Sophia's marriage, which passed off very quietly, and Sophia ate a hearty dinner after it, which was what usually happened to that interesting young lady, every day of her life, at about six o'clock.

Sophia, having the command of more guineas than ever she

had expected to have had pence, did nothing, from morning till night, but throw them away. She would go into a shop, and ask for two or three Brussells veils—send a beggar's family to an expensive tailor, to be clothed—build a little island on a pond—buy a dressing-box of fifteen hundred pounds price, and all within a week. Lord Berwick was often reminded that this silly girl would ruin him, without comfort or benefit to herself; but his answer was, that he could not endure to scold the innocent creature, but must trust to her common sense for shortly finding out that all this extravagance could not last, even if he possessed four times as large an estate.

Sophia, finding that money was poured into her lap just as fast as she could ask for it, and seeing no end to it, thought that nothing could be more easy to practise than generosity. She was, however, nearly four months in the habit of throwing away money by wholesale, before she made an attempt to be of the least service to her mother, though she knew well how harrassed that dear parent was, with her very large family. At last she amused herself, at her country house, by sending her mother cartloads of dishes, plates and saucepans, proposing to furnish her a house.

Lord Berwick's agent having sold Sophia's house in Montagu Square for two thousand pounds, and presenting it to her, when she really knew not well what to do with it, Sophia sent it to her mother. I mention this circumstance, merely as a matter of justice to a little uninteresting being whom I rather dislike than otherwise, and will repeat it as often as I have an opportunity to do so.

Lord Berwick, in less than twelve months after his marriage, was so involved, as to be under the necessity of making over the whole of his property to his creditors for I do not know how many years.

Our young sister, Charlotte, then about seven years of age, was a sweet, lovely little creature, and promised to be one of the finest dancers of the age. She had been some time a pupil of Monsieur Boigera, of the Opera House.

It was not the profession my mother would have preferred, but Charlotte promised to do wonders in it, and with her striking beauty, there could have been little doubt of her marrying well from the stage; and a mother who has fifteen children to provide for, cannot do as she pleases.

Charlotte had already made her *début* as Cupid, and delighted everybody who saw her, when Lord and Lady Berwick, seized with a fit of pride, which they nicknamed virtue, begged leave to snatch the child from such a shocking profession, and they undertook to bring her up and provide for her under their own eyes. My poor mother joyfully closed with this apparently kind offer, and immediately made Charlotte forsake the profession which, with her talents, must have made her fortune, with or without marriage, to go and live with Sophia.

The child, when at her country seat, became a great favourite with the wife of Lord Berwick's brother, Mrs. Hill, and all went on charmingly, till Charlotte began to look like a woman, and one of such uncommon loveliness as to attract the attention of all the elegant young men in the neighbourhood. Sophia could not endure this. Even at the Opera, many a man has preferred offering his arm to Charlotte; nay, it was said, a country gentleman of very large property was expected to make Charlotte an honourable proposal. This was too much. Poor Charlotte, after having forsaken the profession in which she must have succeeded, to be bred up in luxury, among nobility, who looked on her as half an angel, was bundled off to a country school, there to earn her daily bread by birching young vulgar misses, and teaching them their French and English grammar; and there has poor Charlotte been forced to bloom unseen, wasting her sweetness on the desert air, ever since.

Patronage is a fine thing! ! !

I should like to know what Charlotte says about it, as she sits darning her cotton stockings on a Saturday night.

My time, in London, passed on pleasantly enough at this period, as I went wherever I pleased. The only drawback to my comfort was, that the Duke of Beaufort did nothing but

write and torment Lord Worcester to leave me, while Worcester's love seemed to increase on the receipt of every scolding letter. He daily swore to make me his wife, and professed to be wretched whenever I desired him not to think of marriage.

Her Grace of Beaufort's letters to her son, which I always had the honour of perusing, were extremely eloquent on my subject. The Duchess, unlike Lord Frederic Bentinck, was fond of hard words. *This absurd attachment of yours, for this vile profligate woman, does but prove*, wrote this noble personage, *the total subjugation of your understanding.*

In answer to this nervous paragraph in one of Her Grace's epistles, I beg leave to correct the word subjugation. Not that there is any harm in it, on the contrary, it is a very learned kind of a full sounding expression, and looks handsome in a letter; but then it is too learned to be so ignorantly misapplied. Her Grace, in her zeal to be fine, must have mistaken it for something else, since I can offer an unanswerable reason why her hopeful son, Worcester, could not have his understanding subjugated, even by the wonderful charms of Harriette Wilson, and that in four simple words: He never possessed any.

Her Grace, in her infinite condescension, then goes on to state that the said Harriette Wilson is the lowest, and most profligate creature alive. In short, so very bad, that she once sent for her own immaculate brother! ! ! alluding to my having ordered up that worthy man to Marylebone fields, one morning before breakfast. After continuing this most ladylike style of abuse, in detail, enlarging on my former little sins and peccadilloes, she writes, in a postscript—*Of course, Worcester, your own sense* (she forgot that it was subjugated) *will teach you to conceal this letter from the person of whom I have spoken so freely.*

"It is very hard upon me!" said I one day to Lord Worcester, after reading one of Her Grace's flattering letters. "I was well disposed towards you, and towards your family, for your sake. I have constantly refused to accept expensive presents from you, and I have saved you from gambling, and various other vices and

misfortunes, to which you would otherwise have been, shall I say, in humble imitation of Her Grace, subjugated? I have refused to become Marchioness of Worcester, over and over again, believing that such a marriage would distress your family, and in return, your Duchess-mother, with the usual charity of all ladies who either are, or pass for being, chaste, insists on my being at once turned adrift into the streets, and entirely unprovided for."

At last there came another, very severe letter, from the Duke of Beaufort, insisting on Lord Worcester immediately joining him at his seat near Oxford.

Worcester declared that he would not go, while I insisted that he should not disobey his father.

"Do not irritate His Grace," said I; "but on the contrary, strive to set his mind at rest, by assuring him that I wish you too well to marry you. True, the Duchess is very abusive, rather vulgarly so, perhaps, all things considered; but I have no wish to deserve harsh language from your mother, in order that I may think of it with calm indifference."

Worcester spoke very handsomely on this subject. "I love my father and mother," said he, "and it would go to my heart to disobey them, if I saw them inclined to act with justice and humanity towards you. As it is, I could not resign them for ever, without the deepest regret: at the same time, I solemnly declare to you, upon my honour and soul, if it were necessary to make a choice, and I must lose, for ever, either you, to whom I conceive myself bound quite as sacredly as though we were really married, or my whole family, I would not hesitate one instant, not even if they could cut me off with a shilling. I should prefer, ten thousand times over, driving a mail coach for our daily support, and living with you in a garret, to any magnificence that could be offered me without you."

His Lordship was miserably agitated, when he found that I seriously insisted on his leaving me to join his father; and perhaps he had, for this once, ventured to disobey me, had not his uncle, Lord William Somerset, at the Duke of Beaufort's

request, called on us, and insisted on not leaving the house till he had seen Worcester safe off in the Oxford mail.

I forgot to mention a little circumstance which happened on the day previous to Lord Worcester's departure for Badminton, which is the name of his father's country seat. We were sitting near one of the windows together, when a man, on the opposite side of the way, attracted my notice. Surely, methought, I must have seen that man before. He was standing quite still, and, for several minutes I could not, for the life of me, catch a second glimpse of his face, which had been turned towards us but for an instant. At last he seemed as though he were making for my door.

"That is the man!" I exclaimed, "that is the madman!"

I spoke from the sudden impulse of the moment, and regretted no less instantaneously; but nothing I could say or do had power to detain Lord Worcester, who immediately darted across the street, and inquired of the man what his business had been with me, and why he had presumed to enter my house?

The man answered that he had no business with me, and had never even dreamed of entering my house.

Worcester called him a d——d liar, and throwing his card at him at the same time, asked him who he was? and where he came from?

The man refused to satisfy this inquiry, and fixed his eyes on Worcester with a vacant gaze.

"You won't tell me your name, then?"

"No," said the man at last, adding that he did not choose to have his name handed about in such company.

Worcester remarked that he rather fancied no one would ever hear his name as a fighter; but if he was ashamed of his name, and felt conscious that his rank was too low in life for him to meet in a duel, without disgracing himself as a gentleman, he was ready to turn into the next field with him, and set to work with their fists, in the way most suitable to a blackguard like him!

The man declared that he was not a bruiser, and refused to stir.

Worcester struck him with his stick, when the man put himself into an attitude of defence; but not at all scientifically.

The fight lasted full twenty minutes. It took place in a public street, in the broad face of day.

I did not see the end of the contest, but Worcester, on his return, informed me that he had been victorious, and then retired to wash the blood from his hands and nose.

The Honourable Berkeley Craven, who at all times can smell out a fight, as often as such a thing occurs within ten miles of him, was present, I presume, at this mighty encounter, since he afterwards mentioned the circumstance to me, declaring that he knew Worcester's antagonist to be a young man of good family, who had twice made his escape from a madhouse.

Poor fellow! however, he appeared to be of such muscular strength, that I do not think Worcester could have done him any material injury; notwithstanding His Lordship was a pupil of Jackson! !

Worcester shed tears in abundance at parting with me. His uncle, Lord William Somerset, placed himself in an easy chair, swearing he would not stir without his nephew.

Worcester declared to his uncle that he was a d—m—n bore, and ought to be sensible how desirous he naturally must be to pass an hour or two alone with me, previous to his departure for Badminton.

Lord William Somerset, however, remained firm as a rock, and took Worcester out of the house at about half-past seven in the evening; which happened to be just in time to take possession of his place in the Oxford mail.

Now what am I next to amuse my readers with? no! that's a vanity, I meant to ask, what I should try to amuse them with? Worcester is gone to his papa's at Badminton; and I, being sworn to constancy, have no other beaux to write about.

Let us inquire what my sister Fanny is doing? She looked very serious when I called upon her, as she sat nursing Parker's pretty little daughter and kissing it.

"Colonel Parker is going to Spain," said Fanny to me, the moment I entered her room, and I saw a tear trembling in her bright eye.

"So must half the fine young men in England," was my reply.

"Parker is the only man on earth who has ever treated me with true respect and kindness," continued Fanny, "and my attachment to him is very strong; more so, perhaps, than you think for."

I told her that I could not doubt her love for the father of her infant.

"I am not romantic," Fanny went on to say, while sitting in a musing sort of attitude, and seeming quite inattentive to my last wise speech. "It is not in my nature to be in the least romantic or sentimental, yet, when Parker forsakes me, I shall die of it!"

"Fiddlestick," I answered, "you are always talking about dying, merely because your nerves are weak, and, in the meantime, I never saw you look better in my life: when does Colonel Parker set off?"

"To-morrow night," she replied.

"He will write, of course?"

"He has promised to do so by every post."

I had seldom seen Fanny so serious. I begged her to come to me as soon as Parker had left her, and promised to do everything in my power to enliven her.

She told me that Julia wished her, of all things, to board with her again, as soon as Parker went to Spain, "and," continued Fanny, "I feel so melancholy that I think I shall avail myself of her invitation, provided she will permit me to furnish a spare empty room she has in her house, and keep it entirely to myself. Do you know," continued Fanny, "I, who used to abhor solitude, even for a single morning, am now become very fond of it? I love to think, and to read; and the more serious the work, the better it suits the present tone of my mind. I have lately been copying the passages which have most struck me, and, when you look them over, you will be astonished at my change of sentiments and taste."

I asked her if her late studies had been religious?

"No," said Fanny; "but the books I like now are such as I consider most calculated to teach us fortitude to endure the ills, miseries and disappointments of this life. I shall yet, I know, suffer much in mind, as well as in body; and the end of it all will be death! Do not I require fortitude?"

"We shall all die," was my answer; "but the time and the manner of our deaths is unknown to us. No doubt, too, we all have our portion of sorrow and trouble to look forward to; but those sorrows are seldom without some alleviation, or mixture of happiness, neither are the comforts we are permitted to enjoy on earth, by any means confined to those of youthful age alone. If in a more advanced period we feel not wild rapture, yet are we infinitely more calm, and our pleasures are more real and certain, since they depend on the present. In advanced life we enjoy, while girls and boys pursue shadows and live on hope."

There is no doubt that every age has its portion of enjoyments, as well as cares," rejoined Fanny; "but for myself I am not, I confess, sanguine. I feel a weight about the region of my heart."

I interrupted her, and insisted on taking her directly to Julia's, where I left her, promising to see her early on the following day.

Worcester sent me about six sheets of foolscap, scribbled all over in every corner, once a day, and on Sunday he rode nine miles to overtake the coach, with a volume! ! He had, he said, been accused by the Duke, his father, of wishing to make me his wife, and he had found it impossible to deny that such was, in fact, his first hope. His father used very harsh words, and Worcester's courage and firmness had consequently increased. Suddenly, the Duke had changed this high tone, and taking his son by the hand, addressed him with much apparent feeling. This, as I afterwards learned from His Grace's brother, was a mere coldblooded plan, settled between these two hopeful gentlemen, who had agreed that their best chance was to touch up the young Marquis with a little bit of sentiment. Nay, in their zeal, they agreed to carry the farce to such lengths as even

to speak of me, their nightmare! ! the person on earth which they most abhorred, and whose influence they most dreaded, with an appearance of feeling and respect, praying inwardly that either an earthquake might swallow me up, or that I might be seized with sudden death.

"My dear, dear boy," said Beaufort, "you must forgive me, if the extreme anxiety you have for such a long time occasioned myself and your poor mother, has, for a season, made me lose my temper. I see that your feeling for Harriette is real, and beyond your power to overcome, at present. Indeed, if she is good to you, I desire that every care and attention should be paid her, and you shall return to her, and be teased no more on the subject: only pass your word and honour to me, as a son, and as a gentleman, that you will never marry her, and you shall hear no more from either of us on the subject."

Worcester, in his letter to me, where he described this scene, professed to have been deeply affected by it, and to have passed the following night and day in tears, yet he firmly refused to comply with his father's request. *Et tout fut consternation, dans le plus beau et le plus agréable château qu'on puisse imaginer! !*

All those letters from Lord Worcester having been since returned to the Duke of Beaufort, that honourable nobleman, with his son, may be pleased to deny that such letters were written. However, after referring my readers to the celebrated Henry Brougham, M.P. of Lincoln's Inn, and another highly respectable counsellor of the same place, named Treslove, who have both read the whole of Lord Worcester's correspondence (why they did so, shall be told hereafter), I will leave them to form their own conclusions as to the truth or falsehood of what I have written, or shall write, on the subject of those worthy wiseacres, the Beauforts! !

Worcester concluded this letter by declaring he could not and would not remain any longer absent from me, and that I was all the consolation which was left him on earth, since his father was about to turn his back on him for ever.

I answered this letter immediately, to this effect:

If, my dear Worcester, you do not immediately write, to give me your honour that you have set your father's mind at rest, by having complied with his late reasonable request, you lose me now at once and for ever. For I shall go where you will never find me. What happiness, think you, could we enjoy, at the expense of making your parents miserable? They have good reason for what they request, and to save the time it would take you to contradict this last assertion of mine, I declare to you that I never will be your wife.

Au reste, *my dear Worcester, what is there in a ceremony, and what do I care for a title? I swear, so help me God, I have ever been faithful to you, since the first hour in which I placed myself under your protection, and in all and everything that was in my power I have acted, and ever will act, in a way to deserve your esteem, as well as that of your family, in order that the abuse of Her Grace of Beaufort may sit light upon my heart and mind. What gratification, think you, could I enjoy at the idea of having merely inspired you with a strong passion for me, while I felt that, by my selfish conduct, and the advantage I was ready to take of such an accidental circumstance, I had forfeited all right and title to your respect or future friendship?*

I have said enough, I am sure, to convince any man worthy the name, and therefore you will have made friends with your father, and be on your road to join me, very shortly after the receipt of this letter. So till then, God bless you; but, remember, I can be firm and keep my word.

In three days after I had dispatched the above letter, Worcester returned to me, having made the Duke of Beaufort the promise he had required. We now enjoyed something like quietness during the remainder of our stay in London.

Worcester appeared to have suffered much during his visit to his father's, for he was so much paler and thinner, I really thought him consumptive. It was over His Lordship's pride and delight to drive me about the streets or the park, and to accompany me wherever I went. He but seldom went into

society, and when he did, he always refused to dance, much as he used to like it. In short, his passion for me, which, from the very first, seemed so ardent that I knew not it was in human nature that it could be susceptible of increase, became stronger with the difficulty of indulging it.

"My brother is a fool," said Lord William Somerset one day to us. "I would have cured you both in less than a month, and made Worcester hate you most cordially."

"How, pray?" I inquired.

"Why," continued Lord William, "merely by shutting you up in one of my country houses together, making it my request that you never left each other an instant, to the end of your lives."

Worcester called God to witness, that he was as sure, as of his existence, that he could never love anything in the shape of a woman but myself: "and, were Harriette ever to leave me," he continued, "I should become a mere, coldblooded, unfeeling profligate, for all the good about me is practised by her advice and example, or for her sake, that I may be somewhat more deserving of her."

Lord William laughed at his romance, and, I remember, took advantage of his absence to try to make love to me himself! ! But at this I only laughed, in my turn, and in spite of that common English mistake which he fell into, in supposing that all unmarried females must be either maids or bad women, he was, take him altogether, I rather think, about the best of the whole set; and I am almost sorry I called him Lord Berwick's Tiger. But what is an extravagant fellow to do, with high rank and little or no money? and who was to drive old, stupid Tweed, *c'est-à-dire mon très aimable beau-frère*, up and down, without borrowing a trifle, or not a trifle, of his ready cash? Some short time after my sister Sophia's marriage, she received, from Lord Deerhurst, half a year of the annuity he had made her. My eldest brother was requested to call upon His Lordship, for the purpose of restoring the amount into his own hand, and which commission my brother executed, without, I believe, exchanging

a single syllable with that most disgusting nobleman, who ever has been a disgrace to the peerage.

Fanny, in due time, received very kind letters from Colonel Parker, although they were certainly less warm than some of those he had formerly addressed to her. Napier's love for Julia seemed to grow with what it fed on, and this fair lady had been twelve times with child, and was actually turned forty, or as the French say, *elle avait quarante ans, bien sommés.*

In short, she was fat, fair, and forty, though her name did not begin with F; so I beg my fair readers who may be under fifty years of age, never to think of despairing.

Little Kitty, the Lady of Colonel Armstrong, went on very modestly and quietly still, with her dear Tommy, although he now steadfastly adhered to his former resolution not to risk any increase of his family.

Amy continued very steady, and constant in her love for—— variety!

We were all regular at the Opera House, both on Saturdays and Tuesdays; and when the performance had concluded, we always remained late in the rooms, amusing ourselves with the absurdities of George Brummell, Tom Raikes, and various others; some better, none worse! not that Tom Raikes ever did anything bad enough, or what is worse, anything good enough to deserve the honour of a place in these my invaluable memoirs; but since I have named him, be it further known that Tom Raikes is a merchant, who went to Paris and picked up French; and he is something of a mimic too; and he can take off Brummell very tolerably, as well as the manners of the *vieille cour-France beaux;* but I never discovered that he could do anything else. His tricks, like those of the man at Calais who entertains travellers, while they dine, by imitating singing birds, cuckoos, and castanets, are very well on the first representation; but it is, indeed, heavy work to be thrown into the society of Mr. Thomas Raikes more than twice in one's life. Brummell often dined with him, and, therefore, I take it for granted Tom Raikes lent Brummell money. If he did, it was even for the

éclat of the thing, and to have it to say that Brummell had dined with him, and that Brummell, his friend Brummell, was an excellent fellow. Tom Raikes happens to be one of the meanest men in England, at least so I have heard from several of his *soi-disant* male friends.

However, he was fortunate in having had a father, who lived before him; as that father was no less fortunate in having met with such a friend as Richard Muilman Trench Chiswell, M.P. to whom the family owes its not undeserved rise. To this Tommy we may apply the epigram written on another Tommy:

What can little Tommy do?
Drive a phaeton and two.
Can little Tommy do no more?
Yes—drive a phaeton and four.

Sophia looked very splendid in her opera box since her marriage, particularly when she wore all the late Lady Berwick's diamonds, and her own to boot. Lord Deerhurst, I observed, for several successive nights made it a point to sit in a box by himself, next to Sophia, and fix his eyes on her the whole of the evening. Not that he regretted or cared for her, but merely because, in his infinite vulgarity and littleness of soul, he gloried in insulting Lord Berwick's feelings, and conceived it high fun to ogle at Sophia's box, and then wink at his companions in the pit: but Lord Berwick was wise for once in his life, for he ever treated Deerhurst's low impertinence with the profound contempt it merited, nor condescended once to make a remark on it, even to his wife, although neither of them could have been blind to what was so very pointed.

To revert to the Beaufort story, *mais c'est perdrix, perdrix, toujours perdrix!*

The Beaufort story may be *fort beau!* and yet, my readers may happen to require a little variety: at all events, if they do not, I do, for there is nothing on earth I think more abominable than to be hammering always at the same thing.

"Hum!" said Alvanly, at a large dinner party, just as the soup

was being handed round, in unusual but very dignified silence. "Hum! this company is growing dull—I'll tell you a story, gentlemen and ladies. In the year fifteen hundred and seventy-two, there was a man who——"

Here he was interrupted by the loud laughter of the whole party, for who could give ear, during the first course, to a story which began as though it was to last for ever! Now the advantage of writing a long story, over that of telling it, is that one may, like a sermoniser in his pulpit, be just as prosy as one pleases, without any fear of interruption; but, seriously, I will venture to vary this dry Beaufort story by whipping in a little anecdote, which occurred either before my acquaintance had commenced with that noble family, or after it had ceased, I forget which, but that is of no consequence. I professed, from the first, to disregard dates. Everything here mentioned or told of happened within the last half century, that is quite certain, and more, perhaps, than you care to be informed of, especially in this place; but I seriously declare, or rather repeat what I fancy I have somewhere declared before, that the careless manner in which these memoirs are written, is all owing to my modesty: or rather the fault lies between my modesty and my indolence. I do not like to take trouble for nothing, and I do not feel at all certain that even the very best I could do, by my unremitting labour, combined with the most studious attention, would be thought worth the attention of the public. In short, when I consider the thing seriously, I am ready to throw down my pen in despair; for how is it possible, I ask myself, in the name of common sense, that I should be able to scribble on any one subject, so as to deserve their patronage? I should, indeed, have given the idea up the other day, had I not recollected a book called *Six Weeks* at Long's. The author made money by it, as his publisher told me, and really I do think that work rather more stupid than mine, or to treat myself with more politeness, I think mine the more pleasant and more natural work of the two.

Perhaps I should do very little better, were I to go through

the drudgery of copying, and correcting, studying and cogitating and all the rest of the ings; but however, if my readers only prove to be commonly civil to me and my maiden-work, they certainly shall hereafter see, but only in one volume, some of my very best and most studied composition.

The little anecdote which I proposed relating, merely to vary the story of the Beauforts, was about a prude, or rather a lady who went by that name. For my own part, I am miserably deficient in grammar, and a thousand more things, and among many others, I am ignorant of the true, genuine, and real meaning of the word prude.

A French *coquette* will call any woman a cold passionless prude who, being attached to her husband and family, shows symptoms of impatience or disgust whenever a chattering fool presumes to pour his regular cut-and-dried, stupid flattery into her ear.

Some call a prude, a woman who steadfastly resists being kissed by a man for whom she has no regard, at a time when her heart is devoted to another.

Pooh! nonsense! says the impatient reader, a prude is a woman who sticks up for ridiculous punctilios in such trifles as are of no real consequence.

True! but then I never yet happened to meet with this sort of thing. I have only seen base copies of it, in women without any real modesty, who affected excessive niceness; but I cannot fancy a woman the worse, or the greater prude, for showing, naturally, any degree of modesty which she may really possess.

The lady, I alluded to just now, was nearly forty years of age, but she was still handsome, although she had entirely ceased to think about the adornment of her person. She was naturally sensible, and misfortunes had made her serious. The most delicate flattery which could have been offered from the lips of youth and beauty, would not have been extremely irksome to one who, having loved a good husband dearly, and lost him, had for ever devoted her mind to other pursuits, as often as she could turn it from melancholy reflections.

I remember hearing this very excellent creature abused for being a nasty, stiff, tiresome prude, because she seriously assured a stupid, ugly fop, who was teasing her with the most insipid impertinence, that the style of his conversation was extremely disagreeable to her.

However, prude or no prude, this good lady was kind enough to receive my visits at all times, with an appearance of real satisfaction.

We wanted to go to the play, for we were both in love with Elliston; but we had no party, and what was worse, no private box. I have never in my life frequented the public boxes, and we scarcely knew our way in, or our way out, from that side of the house; yet, when two women take a thing into their heads, it is not a trifle can induce them to balk their fancies; so, after we had finished our dinner, my friend the prude declared that she was quite old enough to act as *chaperonne* to me, and, going in our morning, quiet costumes, without rouge or ornaments, she was sure no man would dare to insult us.

"In short," continued Prude, for so we will call her, since I do not think it fair to make her real name public, "in short, I never believe in such stories as women often relate to me, about being insulted by the other sex. For my part, I have ever been in the habit of using my liberty, and going where I please, and alone too, when it suited my humour, taking it for granted that, if I am decently and modestly dressed, and conduct myself with perfect propriety, it is impossible the men can mistake me for anything but what I really am; and if they did, the frown of indignation, which a virtuous woman can put into her countenance, cannot fail to awe the most determined libertine."

"*Nous verrons*," said I, as I placed myself before the glass to practise a frown of virtuous indignation, for that night only! but frowning was not my forte, and I made such ridiculous, ugly faces, without looking in the least awful, that Mrs. Prude burst into a loud laugh, requesting me, in God's name, to leave the frowning part of our evening's entertainment entirely to herself.

I did not half like going to the play, without the protection of

a gentleman, or a private box. "It is all very well for you," I said, "but I happen to have no character to spare!"

However, Prude soon overruled my objections, and sent for a hackney-coach to convey us to the theatre.

We were quite delighted with Elliston in the "Honeymoon". We could not, of course, obtain seats in the dress-boxes, in our morning attire, but we had good seats upstairs; and though the men did cast many a sly look at me, yet no one ventured to address us. Even if they had so presumed, I knew that my friend's awe-inspiring frown would set all to rights, *parceque c'était Madame, elle-même, qui me l'avait assuré.*

I was, at that time, very striking; for I never could pass anywhere unnoticed. I do not say this by way of paying myself a compliment, but merely to relate a fact, in which everybody who was then acquainted with me will bear me out. I always hated to be stared at by the mob, and I did my best to prevent it by the simplicity of my evening dresses, which were invariably composed of white gauze or muslin; and my head was always dressed after the fashion of the Irish people's potatoes, *au naturel;* but it would not do. I often wished to be more interesting, and less remarkable; *mais quoi faire?*

"I cannot conceive why these men stare at you in this manner?" said Prude.

"Thank you, ma'am, for the compliment," answered I, laughing.

"I do not mean to say that you are not handsome," continued my very liberal friend; "on the contrary, I think your countenance remarkably fine; but still I wonder why the people look so much more at you than at any other fine, handsome woman who may be in the house!"

"God knows! I do not thank them for their preference," said I, waxing half angry, as I observed the fixed, intense gaze of a young man who, for the last quarter of an hour, had been eagerly watching every turn of my head.

He was a very fashionable-looking man; but not at all handsome. I felt convinced, from that certain *air de famille*, that he

must be a Stanhope, although I had never seen him before. It was neither Lincoln Stanhope, nor Fitzroy, nor that great unlicked cub who was turned out of his regiment for black-legging, or leaguing with blacklegs. These three I had often met. It must be Leicester then, thought I, having heard that Lord Harrington had a son of that name, who was less handsome than his brothers.

"It will not do to attempt frowning at that young man," said I to Mrs. Prude, "as it may have the effect of making him laugh, as it did you at dinner time; but I will fix my eyes on him with an expression of dignity, which is more in their natural character, and try if that will do."

The young man was not vulgarly bold, nor impudent, and his eyes fell under my fixed gaze. He was not immediately behind us; but occupied the second bench to my left. I had no objection to his looking at me modestly. In fact, I rather liked it, being neither more nor less than a mere woman; but I hate vulgarity or assurance in men.

I wanted to have another look at Leicester Stanhope, and which I at last contrived to accomplish slyly. He is ugly, methinks, and yet I prefer him to any of the handsome Stanhopes, for there is something of better feeling, and more expression in his eyes. I dare say this is not, in fact, the case, and that I merely preferred his ugliness to his brother's beauty, because he was the only one of the family who ever seemed to admire me, even for an instant.

No, now I recollect myself, this is a libel on my own attractions: I remember Lord Petersham, after having, for several years, been in the habit of talking to me, and shaking my hand, with the same *sang-froid* one would have expected at fourscore, one Sunday morning, when we crossed each other's path, at Hyde Park corner, paid me the following most flattering compliment.

"You are decidedly a very fine creature, but all that I have known for the last three years, and also that you are the wittiest, cleverest creature in London."

Now Lord Petersham knew no more of my wit than that of the man in the moon, only it was the fashion to call me clever and witty, and whoever had said otherwise would have, himself, passed for a fool.

"But," Petersham went on, "I will be frank with you; for you are too spoiled just now, and too vain to be angry with truth."

"So that you will make haste about it," interrupted I, observing that we were blocking up the road.

"Well then," said Petersham, "frankly, your charms never excited in me the least particle of desire, till this morning."

"The fact is," answered I, laughing, "it required more wit than all the wit of all the Stanhopes to find them out."

"No, no, no," said Petersham, "I always thought you beautiful; but it was the style of beauty that never warmed me till this morning."

"Are you sure you have not mistaken me for the sun?"

"The influence of both at once are, at this moment, almost too much for me," Petersham answered, "and if you are the sort of spirited, independent, fine creature I have always heard you were, you will allow me to accompany you home, immediately, as fast as our horses can drive us."

"Just the sort of thing I should like best!" said I, "if——" and I paused.

"If what?"

"If I happened to have a fancy for you, but frankly, I have none!"

"Upon your honour and word you do not like me?" Petersham asked, with evident astonishment.

"No, really," said I, "although you are very handsome; but you are not my style of man. I am not alluding to your foppery; a young man must ape something, and a polite fop is infinitely better than the heavy swaggering dragoon-style, which I abhor."

"What is it you dislike about me?" Petersham asked.

"Lord bless us, how can you ask such stupid questions, Lord Petersham?" I inquired somewhat impatiently, and then wished him a good morning.

To return to the young man we left staring at me from the back seat of an upper box, and whom I believed could be no other person than the Honourable Leicester Stanhope—it was only between the acts that I recollected he was behind me, being tolerably accustomed to this sort of thing.

When the play was over, we were a little at a loss how to find our way out; but after wandering up one passage, and down another, we came to a large room, lighted well up, and seeing so many people enter it, we concluded that we had only to follow them. However, we had no sooner made our appearance in it, than we were led to imagine that every man we met must have suddenly lost the use of his senses. In vain did poor Prude practise her infallible awe-inspiring frowns!! They did but excite merriment.

"What! are you the bawd?" said one of them, rudely lifting up her bonnet.

"What do you ask for this pretty black-eyed girl?" inquired a drunken man in a dashing light green coat and a red waistcoat, and large tally-ho pin in his shirt, touching me in the most indecent manner; and when I resisted these disgusting liberties with all the strength of my little hands, they only fell into roars of laughter

"Are there no constables here?" asked Prude, in a loud voice.

"Bravo," exclaimed a flashy-looking youth in top-boots, bearing in his hand a cane, with which he tapped an old constable who was near the door, "I say, my boy, that woman insists on having you to go home and sleep with her; but she is perfectly welcome, so that she leaves me her daughter"; and he tried to pull my arm under his.

"Good heavens! what shall we do?" said I, while the tears of anger trembled in my eyes, as I threw a hasty glance round the room to look for protection: and saw Leicester Stanhope, for it was really him, following us at some little distance, and shrinking back, that I might not observe him, evidently half ashamed of the admiration he had evinced towards a woman who walked the lobby!! For it was indeed that most respectable saloon, in

which Prude and I were making an exhibition of our pretty persons, owing to the merest ignorance.

All the world seemed to be in this room, which was something like the round room at the opera. How could we help fancying it was the right way out? in short, we had tried and could find no other. It was immensely crowded, and, as we moved on slowly, every step we took exposed us to fresh insult of the grossest and most disgusting nature. Stanhope seemed determined to see the end of it all, *à la distance*.

"How can that young man stand by, and see two women so shockingly insulted, and not come forward to offer his protection?" said Mrs. Prude, observing Stanhope.

At this moment we came in close contact with some females, whose language made our blood run cold. I hesitated, while I was almost tempted to interest Mr. Stanhope to protect us to a carriage: a horrible-looking, fat, bloated man, in a state of brutal intoxication, being actually about to thrust his hand into my bosom, Stanhope took a hasty glance at my countenance, and, observing it crimson up to my very eyes, he did, as by some ungovernable impulse, *qu'etait plus fort que lui*, hastily place his person before me, as a protection, nay almost in defiance of the fat man.

"I believe I am addressing a Mr. Stanhope?" said I to him, in much agitation.

Leicester bowed with an appearance of great reserve.

"Being acquainted with several of your brothers," I continued, "I must take the liberty to entreat you will either protect us to a hackney-coach, or employ some honest man to do us a kindness you see we stand so deplorably in need of."

"Is it possible that you seriously wish to avoid all this impertinence?" asked Leicester, in evident but gratified surprise.

Both Mrs. Prude and myself actually fell back a pace or two, as we fixed our eyes on him in speechless astonishment at his manner of asking this question.

"Do not you really know what place this is? Do not you know that you are in the lobby?" asked Stanhope, whispering in my ear.

"Oh, dear me! good gracious, Mrs. Prude, we are in the lobby, with all the very worst women!" said I, and I thought Prude would have fallen back in a fainting fit.

Leicester Stanhope politely offered me his arm, and hastened to convey us out of the house. He afterwards set us down in safety, at my own door, requesting permission to inquire after my health the next morning.

For some weeks after this, Leicester was, or affected to be, in love with me, and was constantly making up little parties to the minor theatres, for my amusement. One night Amy caught a glimpse of us at some public place, I forget which.

"Kitty," said Amy to Mrs. Armstrong, "there is Harriette with a new man. I must go and call on her, without fail, to-morrow." I was consequently honoured with her early visit the next day.

"How do you do, Harriette?" said kind Amy. "I called to inquire after your health; because you looked rather pale last night, at the—— *Apropos!* who was that elegant-looking man with you?"

Having answered her first question, she begged to know when I was likely to see him again.

"Leicester Stanhope wants me to go to Drury Lane to-night, and has taken a private box for me."

"Oh! pray do admit me of your party," said Amy, "for I am so very dull, and ill."

I understood her perfectly, and was well aware of two things —first, that she would try hard to make Leicester fall in love with her, and secondly, she would, by various little spiteful hints, uttered in a tone of innocent *naïveté*, do her best to inspire him with contempt for me: but what did I care for Leicester Stanhope, or any one of his stupid race, beyond the mere pastime these attentions might afford me *pour le moment?* therefore I invited Amy to join us.

In less than a fortnight from that evening, Amy and Leicester were to be found ruralising together at a retired pot-house at Putney, or Clapham, or some such place, for their honeymoon!

I forget which of them got tired first; but I know one of them was tired in less than a week, and Amy returned to town, and her dear variety! !

CHAPTER XVI

I, TOO, must return to my dear Worcester! whose noble father had allowed him six or eight months more to grow tired of me, during which time nothing very remarkable occurred, except that Worcester's love and passion absolutely did increase daily, although that was what I had imagined to be morally and physically impossible.

His Grace now became furious again, and so did his gentle Duchess. Their Graces were both in town, and tormented Worcester hourly. The Duchess often declared, in the presence of a female servant, who afterwards repeated it to me, that she should prefer seeing her son dead under his horse's feet to his becoming my husband! His Grace thought that we had been privately married.

Worcester was desirous that I should disguise myself, and go with him to Gretna Green.

"Have you forgotten the promise you made to your father?" I asked.

"It was a conditional promise," answered His Lordship, and my father has broken the conditions. You see that he refuses to let me live on with you in peace, and again and again I most solemnly swear to make you my wife, whenever I can obtain your consent! !"

Worcester was over head and ears in debt, and on this subject the Duke was eternally lecturing, as in duty bound; declaring, for his own part, he had never, when he was Marquis of Worcester, exceeded his allowance, or incurred a single debt.

I do not mean to dwell on the subject of Worcester's love, and Worcester's devoted attentions to me, as I conceive nothing

more uninteresting. His love never varied the least in the world, nor did we ever quarrel!

We returned once more to Brighton, and after continuing there for about two months, Worcester's troop was ordered to be stationed in a small village near Portsmouth, to guard the prisoners.

Quintin offered him the choice of changing his troop; but Worcester said, if I did not mind passing a short time at a wretched little village, he would much rather not leave it.

I was perfectly willing to accompany him; and on the day appointed for our leaving Brighton, four post-horses were put to Worcester's travelling chariot, which was to carry me to our destination. The distance was about forty miles, and the troop, with the Duc de Guiche, Worcester, and Lord Arthur Hill, were to rest one night on the road.

I never once entered the carriage; but rode in a line with the officers, dressed in my regimental cap and habit, like a little recruit. We all lodged together in the same deplorable pot-house. Our bedroom served us for parlour, kitchen, and hall, and we dined together in the only spare room there was, in this apology for an inn, furnished exactly in the usual style of such places; to wit, twelve immense, high-backed, black leather chairs, too heavy for anybody, except Bankhead, to move; and the wainscot adorned with such pictures as—a fox chase, and then the Virgin Mary, and cheek-by-jowl with that holy woman, Bellingham, the murderer of Perceval; next a print of King George the Third, in his parliamentary robes—a county map—the holy apostles sitting at the last supper, and a poll parrot, done in what is, I believe, usually called clothwork; plenty of sand on the floor, and plenty of wine glasses, tooth-picks, and cruets on the sideboard.

It poured of rain every day and all day long, during the first fortnight of our residence in this earthly paradise; and we further enjoyed the exquisite odours which had been accumulating, time out of mind, from beer and tobacco! ! The weather also being windy, as well as rainy, the signboard, on which was

depicted a flaming red bear, danced more merrily than musically at our window.

Here Worcester, once upon a time, laid his lordly head upon a large mahogany table, after wiping away the sour beer which fantastically varied its surface, and, with infinite enthusiasm, delivered himself to me in such soft words as, "Oh Harriette, my adored, delicious, lovely, divine Harriette, what perfect happiness is this! passing, thus, every minute of the day and night, in your society! ! God only knows how long I shall be permitted to enjoy all this felicity; but it is too great, I feel, to last. Nobody was ever thus happy long. They will make my going abroad a point of honour; but even then, my beloved angel-wife will accompany me! yet alas! how dreadful it will be to see you exposed to the dangers and inconveniences of war!"

I had a real tenderness and sisterly affection for Worcester, at that time. I should otherwise have been the most ungrateful, callous, and inhuman creature breathing; and I really was about to make a very tender, warm, and suitable reply; but, at that critical moment, the woman brought in a large platter of ill-dressed veal cutlets and bacon, followed by the Duc de Guiche, and the fat Lord Arthur Hill.

After our sumptuous dinner, Lord Arthur proposed our driving over to Portsmouth, to see the play.

We went accordingly, and having hired a large stage-box, and seated ourselves in due form, all the sailors in the gallery began hissing and pelting us with oranges, and made such an astounding noise that, out of compassion for ourselves, as well as the rest of the audience, we were obliged to leave the theatre before the first act was over, and we were followed by a whole gang of tars, on our way to the inn. They called us Mounseers—German moustache rascals, and bl—dy Frenchmen.

I know not whether the sailors objected to the dress of dragoons in general, as being a German costume, or whether it was our French Duc de Guiche who had caused all the mischief. However that may be, His Grace of Beaufort having got hold of the story from the newspapers probably, declared, with his

usual liberality towards me, that the English tars at Portsmouth could not endure the idea of my not being legally married to Worcester; want of chastity being held in utter abhorrence among the crews of our Royal Navy, as a sin they have no idea of, and one which is never, by any chance, practised by them.

In short, the Duke would not seem to entertain the slightest doubt that the whole audience, nay, the whole town, had been thrown into confusion and alarm by the appearance of so wicked a sinner as myself, in so chaste a seaport. The ladies of all seaports are reputed very select, I believe, and I would have all ladies of easy virtue, and I am sure my virtue always sat very easy upon me; or even ladies whose virtue is, or even has been, in the slightest degree, suspected; to profit by my terrible example, and avoid showing their naughty faces either at Portsmouth or Wapping; for, really, the Duke of Beaufort says that sailors cannot possibly endure the slightest deviation from the nicest female propriety, particularly when they come off a long voyage!

The world indeed believed me a lawfully wedded wife; and, even the Duke himself suspected that I was privately married; but then my certificate ought to have been forwarded to the governor of Portsmouth before I presumed to enter that very chaste town, and then I should have been permitted to have witnessed the performance in peace and quietness!

Not to digress too long, being all four hissed out of Portsmouth with much *éclat*, we returned to our humble village, looking rather wise at each other; and, for the next two months, or thereabouts, that we remained in that part of the world, we confined ourselves to our quarters, *parceque les plaisirs du village valaient, pour le moins, ceux dont on nous regalait à la ville.*

His Grace of Beaufort at last obtained leave for Worcester to join him at Badminton; and being, as he said, rendered perfectly miserable, every hour that his son continued within the magic circle of my spells! ! he wrote to insist on Worcester joining him in a few days.

Worcester, when he read these commands from his father,

looked as if he had received his death-warrant. He was, indeed, completely wretched. For my part, I also felt very melancholy and dull, under the idea that, somehow or other, His Grace was determined to separate us. I had become habituated to Worcester's society and Worcester's attentions, and was beginning to feel a very lively friendship for him. Such friendships are often more lasting, and better for home, steady service than love; and then I knew well that I should not again meet with half such kindness and devotion from any other man, for I never in my life heard of one, young or old, who was so eternally *aux petits soins*, and paid a woman the unremitting attention which I received from Worcester, up to the last hour of our continuing together.

I cannot, however, say that I was sorry to exchange this miserable, muddy village for my comfortable house in town. Not but Lord Arthur Hill had something comical about his manner, which I thought amusing enough, yet there was no real fun nor humour in the Duc de Guiche, although he often laughed in much the same stiff and unnatural style as his shirt collars. He was not remarkably popular, either with soldiers or officers, although he is undoubtedly a very handsome gentleman-like Frenchman, and, as I have always heard, and been inclined to believe, a very brave one too. He was rather severe with the men, and, I fancy, ill-tempered, and he was a decided fop, as I think I have before mentioned.

I remember the Duc de Guiche, one day, desiring Lord Charles Somerset's eldest son, who was a cornet in the tenth, at Brighton, to change the saddle on which he was riding, and which happened to be one of his father's constructing, while His Lordship commanded the district, and to substitute the regular regimental saddle.

The lad refused, declaring that he had been commanded by Lord Charles to use his own.

De Guiche was captain of the troop to which young Somerset belonged, and it was the Duke's turn to attend in the riding school.

The Duke, much incensed, would have put Somerset under arrest, if he had not immediately changed the saddle.

The lad was very sulky, and complained, in the evening, to his papa.

It was afterwards reported to De Guiche that Lord Charles had made use of some hasty remark, on hearing his boy's account of the saddle, and which amounted to the same thing, as though he had declared De Guiche to have presumed to take an unwarrantable liberty. I will not say this was the exact expression, because I was not present; but Worcester assured me that De Guiche was miserably agitated on the following day, under the impression that Lord Charles had said even more than this; and, in fact, that His Lordship had threatened, in the presence of his son, to put the Duke under arrest. De Guiche, in short, not being able to call his commanding officer to account, fell sick, from very vexation and pride of heart, and was obliged to keep his room.

The late Lady Charles Somerset appeared to feel much anxiety at the aspect of the difference, and requested Worcester to try and conciliate.

"Do, for God's sake, Worcester, go to De Guiche, and see what is to be done," said Her Ladyship to her nephew.

Worcester did so, and, on his return, described to me what had passed between himself and the handsome young Frenchman, whom he had just visited in his barrack-room.

De Guiche commenced by descanting on the military laws, and it was evident he had made them his particular study. It was natural for a proud, noble, young emigrant, like De Guiche, to have carefully acquainted himself with the duties of his profession, in order, by the strictest observance of them, to escape such reproof as his high spirit could ill brook.

Worcester admitted that young Somerset had been decidedly under De Guiche's command, when he presumed to murmur, or rather refused to obey His Grace.

"*Mon Dieu!*" said De Guiche, in much agitation, or rather with suppressed rage, "is it the wish of Lord Charles Somerset

that exception shall be made for his son, of regimental duty?"

"Why no," answered Worcester, "my uncle, I am sure, did not wish that. Perhaps, though His Lordship did not say so to me, yet I think it possible that, at the moment, he suffered some little hasty expression to escape him, under the idea that since he, who was an excellent judge of riding, and a commander, here, had advised his son to ride on that saddle, perhaps Lord Charles expected, from your politeness—but, I give you my honour, I have not spoken to my uncle on the affair. My own, and Lady Charles's friendship for you alone, induce me to interfere; but this I will venture to assert of my uncle, he has too much respect for military discipline ever to have desired his son to neglect it; and I am also sure that, if any remark was made, it must have been spoken in haste, and ought not to have been repeated to you."

"It is, in my opinion, just the contrary of that," said De Guiche, who spoke very good English for a Frenchman, although with somewhat of the foreign accent and idiom, "it is, in my opinion, exactly the contrary of that; if Lord Charles Somerset had used some expressions which relate to my government of my troop, or to any part of my conduct as an officer, he cannot, I should think he ought not, to make objections nor scruple to repeat again, what he has said before and—*écoutez-moi, permettez* (observing that Worcester was about to interrupt him)—and if Lord Charles Somerset, when he made use of remarks to my prejudice, was, as you suggest, under the influence of passion, His Lordship, if it give him pleasure to be so far condescending, will repeat that circumstance also, and in the presence of any gentleman he pleases."

"If you request me, as your friend, I will certainly acquaint Lord Charles with what you say," answered Worcester.

"I wish to inquire of His Lordship respectfully, if he has objections to tell me whether or not he has ever threatened to put me under arrest? If he did, I think he will not mind to repeat it."

Lady Charles Somerset was very fond of this young foreigner,

and almost considered him as her son. Perhaps she rather expected he might become her relation one day or other, since he was always romping with her two bold daughters, who, as Worcester informed me, were to be found continually, in a morning, sitting on His Grace's knee, and allowing him to kiss them, and, as Worcester fancied, to do much more.

"I like your presuming to talk about Harriette," Worcester would often say to his ugly cousins, "when you are both ten thousand times bolder, and more impudent, and more like—— than she is, only you are both so ugly."

"Ah, that's right, scold them, Worcester," grunted out poor Lady Charles, who was at that time in a very bad state of health. "Do, for God's sake, my dear Worcester, keep those girls in order. For shame, child! ! De Guiche, I will not suffer you to kiss and pull my daughters about in this way."

"Poor little thing, she is jealous! !" De Guiche used to say, and then, to make all square, as Will Haught termed it, he would put his arms about the little fat Lady Charles's neck, and kiss her with such vehemence that the good woman was half smothered.

But recollect readers, and remember, my own favourite Lord Charles; but, *àpropos*, my Lord, do you know what the King one day said of you, and your spencer, and your trousers, and your ——but never mind, inquire of Worcester, and remember, I say, that all I know about your wife and daughter is from what your nephew told me, who is, as you know, an excellent mimic.

I only wish you were to see him take off your Lordship, when you are dealing for a horse! !

But to De Guiche's story—Lord Charles, as I understand, made His Grace an apology, and now my story's done.

One day, when Worcester refused to pass before De Guiche, as a matter of etiquette, while the young Frenchman, who was then called the Count de Grammont, refused to move forward, in spite of all Worcester could say, I became quite impatient, and tired of waiting.

"How is this?" said I to De Guiche, when at last we were

seated at table. "Why do you hesitate to go first, if your rank is highest; and if it is not, how happens it that Worcester, who is generally so *au fait* on all these subjects, is mistaken?"

"I am, in fact and truth, the Duc de Guiche," said His Grace; "but since, for some serious reasons, I do not take that title in England, and as I never expect to enjoy it in my own country, I consider it all nonsense; and, being called Count in the regiment, it would look strange that I should take the precedency of Worcester."

Now I am on the subject of Brighton, I must relate another little anecdote, which ought to have been mentioned earlier. Young Berkeley, as my readers may remember, during the last visit he paid me, which happened on the very morning of my departure from town to join Lord Worcester for the first time, declared, upon his life and soul, that, since he knew himself to be a much handsomer man than His Lordship, he would contrive to be even with me, if I so far presumed to differ in opinion from him, as to prefer the latter. What he said made so little impression on me, that it did not even once occur to my recollection after I had left London, until I was reminded of it by a report of a very disgusting nature, which Augustus had taken care to circulate about town, till it came to Worcester's ears: namely, that the girl whom Worcester wanted to marry was an old flame of his and his brother's, and that both had often passed the night in my house.

Worcester appeared greatly annoyed at this wicked falsehood, and anxiously inquired of me what grounds there were for it?

I assured him, most solemnly, of what I now repeat, with the same candour and anxiety, that I never gave the least encouragement to either of the young Berkeleys, Henry and Augustus, to pursue me; and that, for a length of time, they nevertheless both so haunted and both so persecuted me, with what they were pleased to call their love for me, that, in the case of Augustus, I was very near applying to a magistrate for permission to be let alone.

"But, my dear Worcester," said I, "it will really not be worth

while to give all this nonsense a second thought. You will have rather too much upon your hands, should you resolve to vindicate and defend my virtue, after the manner of Don Quixote; and, provided nothing is said against me or my conduct, since I have known you, I think common sense points out that you had better leave the rest to find its own level, *parceque je ne m'en suis jamais donnée pour une grande vertu; mais tout au contraire, comme vous savez bien!*

Worcester replied that my former faults, deeply as he regretted them, and sincerely as he prayed that they might now be, for ever, abandoned, furnished no excuse for the insult offered to himself, by such disgusting and improbable untruths as Berkeley stated to have occurred, at the very moment when his own most devoted attentions had proved unsuccessful.

I remarked that they were only joking, and everybody knows Augustus too well to believe one word he says, on these sort of subjects.

"Write to him then," said Worcester, "and request him, if he has related this story in joke, to contradict it in earnest."

I wrote accordingly, and Lord Worcester directed and sealed my letter, which was forwarded, and in due time I received an answer, inclosed to the Marquis of Worcester.

My dear Harriette—

Began young Berkeley, and then went on, with his usual incorrigible duplicity and meanness:

The less said, you know, about the past, particularly when it relates to such scenes as you mention, the better. I hope you like Worcester, etc., etc.

Yours, dear Harriette,
Most truly and affectionately.

Lord Worcester immediately inclosed both my letter and the envelope addressed to himself in a blank cover, which he sealed with his arms, and directed to young Berkeley.

In about a week after this letter was dispatched, Henry Wyndham of the tenth Hussars, who is the eldest son of Lord

Egremont, called on Worcester, and not finding him at home, requested to see me, of whom he made very particular inquiries, as to when I expected him, or where he was to be found?

I told Wyndham the surest way for anybody to meet with Worcester, was to remain with me: and being well aware of this fact, he sat down to wait for him.

I did not like to ask questions of Captain Wyndham, although I certainly felt anxious to learn what pressing business he could have with Worcester. His Lordship came home, in less than half an hour, and Wyndham, having requested to say a few words to him in private, was desired to accompany him to his dressing-room.

When Worcester returned to me, he looked unusually pale and agitated. He informed me that young Berkeley had just arrived from his brother's country house, to demand an explanation of him on the subject of having sent back his letter.

"I must go with Henry Wyndham, who is waiting for me, directly," continued Worcester.

I was, of course, very much frightened at this information; but alarmed as I really felt, it certainly struck me that Worcester ought not to have acquainted me, nor any other woman breathing, with what had passed between himself and Captain Wyndham. However, right or wrong, the information served to agitate me most cruelly! I first implored Worcester's coachman to follow, and not lose sight of his master; and then I wrote a hasty scrawl to Lord Charles Somerset, intreating him to prevent mischief, if possible, between his nephew and Berkeley. In short, I made Worcester's private business as public, in a few hours, as though I had been employed for that purpose as town-crier.

In consequence of my letter, Lord Charles Somerset sent down a messenger express, with a note to Worcester, requesting His Lordship not to be too hasty; but to wait till he had been consulted: *Be assured*, continued His Lordship in this pathetic letter to his brave nephew—*be assured that I will advise nothing that can be derogatory to your honour! !*

It was all smoke! ! !

Worcester returned in an hour, and assured me that everything was amicably settled.

"How is that?" I asked, "has Berkeley been induced by fear to render me that justice which he has denied to my earnest entreaty?"

"No!" said Worcester, a little confused. "He has not contradicted his former assertion."

"How could it possibly be settled then?" I inquired, merely for the sake of information.

"Why," said Worcester, "Wyndham assured me that the offence, which Berkeley conceived it impossible to brook, was my having inclosed, with his letter to you, his envelope addressed to me, in which were written a few civil lines requesting me to forward the enclosed, etc., etc."

"Well?" I ejaculated in earnest surprise.

"Well," repeated Worcester, "I was willing to admit that his note to me, which was civil enough, I never meant to have returned to him, and, if I had done so, it must have been by mistake; and Wyndham assured me that, since I was ready to acknowledge so much, he had no doubt that the business might be arranged, this, and this only, being the unpardonable offence."

To make an end, the affair was brought to a conclusion.

I make no comments on a subject, to which I cannot presume myself to be competent. The real facts being stated, and I believe Harry Wyndham will bear me out in them, the world may, and we all know it will, put what construction it please on the conduct of either or both parties. For my own part, I am not like those ugly women and cross old maids, who abuse the world or the world's judgment of my actions. Generally speaking, I have found the world act fairly, justly, and often very liberally, towards me.

It is certainly, perhaps, a misfortune in many respects, for a woman to become the fashion, which was my case; for what second-rate man does not like to be in the fashion? Nay, there

are few, very few, who would not effect pride in the possession of what their betters have coveted in vain!

"I beg you fifty thousand pardons," bawled Lord Petersham to me, one morning, from his or some other person's gay barouche, as I stood at my drawing-room balcony; "but, to save time, will you answer me one single question, from your window? I only want a yes or a no, as I am sure I can take your word."

My house being half in the country, I begged His Lordship to make as free as he pleased.

"Did you," asked His Lordship, forcing a little, mean-looking man, who was seated next to him, to stand up upon his two feet, while I surveyed him, "did you ever see this man, in your born days?"

"Never, to my knowledge," was my reply.

"Then you can declare, at all events, that you never made his acquaintance?" asked Petersham.

"Certainly I can; and your friend will unhesitatingly confirm the truth of what I assert."

"*Tout au contraire*," said Petersham, "he has been amusing us with an account of a former *petite affaire du cœur* he had with you."

"He does me honour," I rejoined, "although he knows I was never so completely blessed as to have been in his society."

"That's quite enough," said Petersham, giving me a significant little wink with his left eye, kissing his hand, and driving off, all at the same moment.

I must now return to Lord Worcester, or rather to my house in town, he having left Portsmouth to join his incensed papa and mamma at Badminton.

The Duchess was a very moral character, and when her first-born was a little boy, he frequented naughty women, and was, in consequence, afflicted with a naughty disease. During his confinement under this attack, the Duchess read him affecting lectures on the enormity of the sin of incontinence, which leads to a complaint with the name of which I shall not soil my pages;

but the Duchess designated it by a new name, and declared that the Almighty had sent it to him as a judgment.

Worcester thought the vehicle unlikely to be made an instrument of God's wrath, and laughed not a little at the sublime idea his mother entertained of Things!

When I got to town, everybody was talking of an amorous adventure of Charlton and Horace Seymour. The latter was a gay, dashing son of Lord somebody Seymour, of the tenth Hussars, whom everybody knows and few care much about.

Charlton was a stupid young fellow, of no particular family, with very red hair; so red, that Sir Harry Mildmay had like to have lost the possession of a beautiful young woman from it.

She was a lovely creature, according to his account; and her name was Kate North, and her protector was Lord Reay, and Kate North was nothing loth:

"But then," said Sir Harry, who could . . . . . after carroty Charlton?"

However, meeting Kate one day in Hyde Park, in Lord Reay's barouche, she struck the gay baronet as being so very unusually handsome, that he resolved to put Charlton's red hair out of his head; and in two days more, Kate North and Sir Henry were on their road to his country house in Hampshire, and poor Lord Reay was left at home to cry willow! willow!

Similar mishaps had, however, befallen him at least forty times before, as His Lordship once assured my friend Julia, with tears in his Scotch eyes, declaring that he spoke moderately and within compass!

Mildmay's love for Kate increased, during the first four-and-twenty hours of their sweet honeymoon; the second was not quite so sweet.

"Don't go into that room, my Henry. You must not, indeed you must not enter that room, darling," cried bonny Kate in a loud voice, observing, with dismay, that her lover had slipped out of his bed, and was making his way towards a little dressing-closet, in which she had, during his last long nap, found it necessary to enter.

"Why not, pray?" asked the delicate, violet-breathing Mildmay (for so Julia used to call this gay baronet), who began to suspect that a man might chance to be in the case.

"Oh—upon my word and honour, you must not—shall not go into the closet!" screamed out dainty Kate, as she leaped from her bed.

"The devil I must not!" said Mildmay, as he entered the forbidden chamber, and saw—no, he did not examine it—his nose—that won't do, it is so vulgar—his olfactory nerves elicited the first evidence, which convinced the baronet that there was something more than customary in that closet, *qui sentait autrefois de musc et de la rose.*

"I am quite satisfied now," said Mildmay, and on the next evening, sweet Kate was again pressed in the arms and to the faithful heart of her Reay! for the forty-first time, I presume.

The seduction of two little milliner-girls by Charlton and Seymour made more noise in the world than all four were worth; or rather caused more, since the story, with Charlton's love letters, were printed and cried all over London, price only one penny, unbound of course, like Kate North's——

"As to our having to pay," said carroty Charlton to me, one night at the opera, when I questioned him respecting it, "that I fully anticipated and was quite ready to do: but what reduces me to absolute despair, by having for ever destroyed my future chances of preferment, is this publication of my circulars, which have served me as love-letters from a boy, up to this very period, with the mere alteration of names and dates!"

I condoled with Mr. Charlton, of course; for how could I avoid it? and then went home to condole with Worcester, who was daily sending me the most dismal accounts of the persecution he had to encounter at home.

I have lost my parents, wrote His Lordship in one of his letters. "*They refuse to acknowledge me as their son, and yet they attempt to shut me up here by force. This I should have resisted, and have returned to you last week, but that my mother declares herself ill, and my father asserts that she is not likely ever to*

recover her late accouchement, while her mind is so dreadfully agitated. For my part I can neither eat nor sleep, and both my father and uncle admit that they have tormented me, till I am seriously ill. I implore you then, my adored, beloved, darling Harriette, to come to me. I never close my eyes in sleep, without awaking in the greatest fright and agony, having dreamed that you were taken away from me for ever.

He then went on to beg and entreat of me, if I had the least pity for him, to disguise myself as a country woman, or a common servant, in a coloured gown and checked apron, and go in the coach to a certain inn at Oxford, where he would contrive, unknown to his father, who should believe him in his bed, to await my arrival at past twelve o'clock at night, which he said was the hour at which the afternoon coach got into Oxford. He then made me at least a thousand humble apologies for having wanted me to disguise myself, and take all this trouble, assuring me that, if I went to Oxford in my usual style and character, someone or other would probably meet me on the road, and he could not describe what would be his parents' indignation and anger, in case my visit to Oxford came to their knowledge.

Were I to give my readers these letters, in Worcester's own expressions, there would be no end to them, since every other word was angel! or adored wife, or beautiful sweet Harriette, or darling sweetest! sweetest darling! dearest dear, dear, dearest, etc., so perhaps they will prefer taking all these sweets at once, that I may proceed quietly with these most amusing and very interesting memoirs.

At about three o'clock on the day after I had received this letter from Lord Worcester, as my sister Fanny was standing at her window, pleasing herself with her pretty little daughter Louisa, a hackney-coach stopped at her door, and out of it sprung a lightfooted spruce damsel, clad in a neat coloured gown, thick shoes, blue stockings, blue check apron, coloured neck-handkerchief, cloth cap, and bright cherry-coloured ribbons. In the next minute, this bold young woman had given both Fanny and her daughter Louisa a hearty kiss!

"Good gracious! my good woman," exclaimed Fanny, pushing me gently aside, and, in the next instant hearing a loud laugh in the room, for I had not observed Julia and Sir John Boyd sitting at the other window, till they joined in our merriment.

"Lord help the woman," said Julia, "what can have put it into her head to appear, this beautiful weather, in such a costume?"

"It is a new style of travelling dress," said I, "and I am going to introduce the fashion. What do you think of my cap? It cost eighteen pence, and my blue stockings? but I can't stay gossiping with you fine ladies, or I shall lose my place in the stage. However, do just look at my nice little bran-new red cloak."

"You don't seriously and really mean to say you are going to travel that figure, and in the broad face of day too?" said Fanny.

"I must! I must! Worcester says, if I don't want to be beaten to a mummy by papa Beaufort, I must go to Oxford in disguise."

"Disguise, indeed!" said Julia.

"If Fred Bentinck meets a woman of my loose morals in this dress, *il croira que c'est la belle Madéline!* !"

"But where is your bonnet?" asked Sir John Boyd.

"Oh! I cannot afford to buy a bonnet; that would be only half-and-half, a mere vulgar, shabby-genteel, cockney kind of a maidservant!"

"You will be found out by your taper-waist, and large bosom."

"Why, what is the matter with it, Sir John? is it not very decently covered by this smart coloured handkerchief?"

"Yes; but it's all too pretty, and your stays are too well made."

Julia's maidservant, who had not recognised me as I flew past her up the stairs, now entered the room, with a message from my hackney-coachman, who was waiting at the door.

"The coachman, ma'am, desires me to tell the young woman, that he shall expect another sixpence if she does not come down directly."

"Oh laws! a mighty! and here I hasn't a got a sixpence in the world, more than what's tied up here, in this here bag, on purpose for to pay my fare to Oxford," said I, holding up a small red bag.

Julia's maidservant looked in my face, and seeing everybody ready to laugh, found it impossible to resist joining them.

"Why, the Lord defend me! Miss Harriette, is it really you?" she asked, opening her eyes as wide as possible.

"You see, Sir John, the delicacy of my shape has not stood the least in my way with the coachman, who did not discover the *air noble* under this costume! but I must be off directly."

"Good-bye! God bless you, mind you write to me directly, and tell me everything that happens to you," said Fanny.

They all gave me a kiss, round, for the form of kissing a woman in blue stockings and a check apron, and I was soon seated in the stage-coach, which was being loaded at the door of the Green Man and Still, or as the Frenchman dated his letter, *chez l'homme vert et tranquil.*

"You're not apt to be sick, are you my dear?" inquired a fat-faced merry-looking man, with a red handkerchief tied over his chin, who had already, with a lady whom I fancied might be his wife, taken possession of the two best seats.

I assured them that I was a very good traveller.

"Because, my dear, you see, many people can't ride backwards; and there's Mrs. Hodson, my wife, as is one of them."

"Oh, the young woman is not particler, I dare say," said Mrs. Hodson, with becoming reserve.

In short, not altogether liking the words my dear, as they had been applied to me by her husband, she thought it monstrous vulgar.

A lady in a green habit, who was standing near the coach door, now vowed and declared her travelling basket should be taken out of the boot, where it had been thrown by mistake, before she would take her seat.

The coachman in vain assured her it was perfectly safe.

"Don't tell me about its safety," cried the angry lady, "I

know what your care of parcels is before to-day."

"Come, come, my good lady," said Mr. Hodson, whom I recognised as a London shoemaker of some celebrity, "come, come, ma'am, your thingumbobs will be quite safe. Don't keep three inside passengers waiting, at a nonplush, for these here trifles!"

"Trifles!" burst forth the exasperated lady, "are females always to be imposed upon in this manner?"

'*Monsieur le Clerc!*" continued the lady, calling to a tall thin Frenchman, in a light grey coat, holding under his arm an umbrella, a book of drawings, an English dictionary, and a microscope, "*Monsieur Le Clerc*, why don't you insist on the coachman's finding my travelling basket?"

"Yes, to be sure, certainly," said the Frenchman, looking about for the coachman.

"*Allons, cocher, madame demande son panier. Madame* ask for one litel someting, out of your boots, directly."

"Did I not desire you to mention, *Monsieur Le Clerc*, when you took my place, that the basket was to go inside?" demanded the lady.

"Yes, *oui*," answered the Frenchman eagerly. "I tell you, Mr. *Cocher*, dis morning, six, seven, ninety-five times, madame must have her litel—vat you call—over her knee."

"I'm sorry for the mistake, sir; but it would take a couple of hours to unload that there boot, and I must be off this here instant."

"Come now, aisey there, aisey," bawled out a queer poor Irishman, with a small bundle in his hand, running towards the coach, in breathless haste. "Aisey! aisey! there, sure and I'm a match for you, this time, anyhow in life," continued he, as he stepped into the coach, and then took out his handkerchief to wipe the perspiration from his face. He was so wretchedly clothed that Mrs. Hodson eyed him with looks of dismay, while drawing her lavender-coloured silk dress close about her person, that it might not be contaminated. I was, indeed, surprised that this poor fellow could afford an inside place.

The lady and her French beau, seeing no remedy, ascended the steps of the carriage in very ill humour, and they were immediately followed by a man with much comic expression in his countenance. He wore a would-be dashing threadbare green coat, with a velvet collar; and his shirt collar was so fine, and so embroidered, and so fringed with rags, that I think he must have purchased it out of the Marquis of Lorne's cast wardrobe. His little Petersham-hat seemed to have been *remit de nouveau*, for the third time at least.

"Lord! Mr. Shuffle, how do you do? who would a thort of our meeting you in the coach?" inquired Mr. and Mrs. Hodson, addressing him in a breath.

"Delighted to see you both," said Shuffle, shaking hands with them.

"And now pray, Mr. Shuffle, if I may be so bold, what might have brought you up to London? what antics might you be up to, hey? Are you stagestruck, as usual, or struck mad by mere accident?"

"Thereby hangs a tale," said Shuffle.

"What! a pigtail? I suppose you're thinking of the shop."

"Not I, indeed," Shuffle observed, "I've done with wig-making these two years; for really it is not in the nature of a man of parts, to stick to the same plodding trade all his life, as you have done, Hodson."

Hodson replied that he knew his friend Shuffle had always been reckoned a bit of a genus, and, for his part, he always knode a genus, half a mile off, by his threadbare coat, and his shoes, worn down at the heels.

"*Aprepo!*" said Mrs. Hodson, "by-the-by, Mr. Shuffle, you forgot to settle for that there pair of boots, before you left Cheltenham, six months ago."

"Very true, my dear lady," answered Shuffle, "all very true: everything shall be settled. I have two irons in the fire at this time, and very great prospects, I assure you; only do pray cut the shop, just now, and indulge me with a little genteel conversation."

"A genteel way of doing a man out of a pair of boots," muttered Hodson; "but I'll tell you what, Mr. Shuffle, you must show me a more lasting trade, or one with more sole in it, before you succeed in making me ashamed of being a shoemaker."

"And pray," continued Hodson, "where's the perpetual motion you were wriggling after so long? and then your rage for the stage, what's become of that? Have you made any money by it?"

"How is it possible," answered Shuffle, "for a man to make money by talents he is not permitted to exert? 'Sir,' said I to the manager of the Liverpool theatre, 'I have cut my trade of wig-making dead, and beg to propose myself to you, as a first-rate performer.'—'Have you any recommendations?' inquired the manager, eyeing me from head to foot.—'Yes, sir,' I replied, 'plenty of recommendations. In the first place, I have an excellent head.' "

"For a wig! a good block, I reckon," interrupted Hodson.

" 'In the second place,' " Shuffle continued, " 'I have the strongest lungs of any man in England.' "

"That is, unfortunately, the case of my good woman here," again interrupted Hodson.

" 'And as for dying, sir,' " still continued Shuffle, " 'I have been practising it for these two years past.' "

"Upon red and grey hair, I presume?" said the incorrigible Hodson.

" 'Sir,' said the Liverpool prig," so Shuffle went on, " 'Sir, our company happens to be, at this moment, complete.' Fifty managers served me the same. At last, however, I got a hearing, and, as I suspected would be the case, was immediately engaged. The play-bills mentioned the part of Romeo, by a gentleman, his first appearance on the stage; but it was a low company, and beggarly audience, which accounts for my having been pelted with oranges, and hissed off the stage! !"

Hodson here burst into a very loud fit of laughter, declaring this was the best joke he ever heard in his life.

Shuffle, without at all joining in his friend's mirth, declared that he had now resigned all thoughts of a profession, the success of which must, often, depend on a set of ignorant blockheads, and turned his thoughts to love and experimental philosophy.

"I say," was Hodson's wise remark, looking very significantly at his friend.

"Well, sir, what have you to say?" Shuffle inquired.

"Blow me, Shuffle, if you aren't a little——" Hodson paused, and touched his forehead.

"Don't meddle with the head, friend, that's not your trade. Oh, by-the-by," Shuffle continued, "talking of heels, I want to consult you about a new sort of elastic sole and heel, after my own invention: one that shall enable a man to swim along the river, like a goose, at the rate of fifteen miles an hour! ! I have just discovered that the goose owes its swiftness to the shape of its feet. Now, my water-shoe must be made to spread itself open, when the foot is extended, and close as it advances."

"Well done, gentlemen," interposed the poor Irish traveller, "this bates the cork jackets, anyhow in life!"

"Who the devil are you, sir?" asked Shuffle, "and what business have you to crack your jokes?"

"The only little objection that I see to your contrivance," continued Pat, "is that the patent shoe will be just after turning into a clog, as soon as it gits under water, good luck to it."

"The devil take me if that warn't a capital joke! so well done, master Pat," said Hodson.

"Is that an Irish wig you have got on your head, Pat?" Shuffle asked, by way of being even with him.

"For God's sake, sink the shop, Shuffle, and let's have a little genteel conversation," said Hodson, imitating Shuffle's late affectation of voice and manner.

"Pray what do you Irish know about wig-making?" asked Shuffle, disregarding Hodson.

"And may be you would not approve, nather, of their nate compact little fashion of breaking a head, perhaps?" inquired Pat, very quietly.

"Come, come, my comical fellow," said Hodson, "don't be so hot. Mr. Shuffle only meant to remark that it was a pity to wear a red wig over your fine head of hair."

"Arrah, by my sowl! and is it under it you'd have me wear it?" asked the Irishman.

"You're a funny chap! but I loves to see a man in good spirits," Hodson remarked.

"Is it in good spirits then you reckon me? Sure and you're out there, anyhow in life; for the devil a drop of spirits have I poured into me, good, bad, or indifferent, since yesterday, worse luck to me!"

"What, are you out of employment then?" Mrs. Hodson inquired.

"No, my lady, in regard to my being employed, just now, looking out for work."

Shuffle inquired how long he had left Ireland?

"Not more than a month, your honour: and four weeks out of that time have I been wandering about the great gawky village of London, up one strate, and down the tother, in search of a friend; and sorrow bit of the smallest intelligence can I gain, anyhow in the world, of poor Kitty O'Mara."

"And is that absolutely necessary?" I asked.

"And did I not promise Mistress Kitty, the mother of him, that I would stick by her darling till the breath was clane out of his body? and then, after our death, wasn't it by mutual agreement, between Kitty and me, that we should dig each other nate, tight bit of a grave, and bury each other, in a jontale, friendly manner? so that, what with disappointment, fatague, and the uncommon insults which have been put upon me lately, sure and I'm completely bothered!"

"And pray, Pat, what takes you over to Oxford?" Hodson asked.

"Sure and I'm just going there to come back again by the marrow-bone stage."

"But what reason have you for making the journey?" said Shuffle.

"Is it what rasin had I? Haven't I paid for my place more than a week ago, and haven't I lost a good sarvice, in them parts, by missing the coach by a trifle of half an hour's oversleeping myself? and did not the proprietor of this same coach promise me the first vacant sate?"

"Well but, having lost your place, why trouble yourself to go down when it is too late?" Hodson inquired.

"And you'd have me chated and diddled out on the fare as well as the service? bad luck to me!" added Pat, with comic gravity.

"Blow me if you ain't a funny one," said Hodson, as the coach stopped to set him down in a small village between London and Oxford, "and since you've put me into spirits, I must put spirits into you, so here's a shilling for you, Pat. In for a penny, as I says, in for a pound. Good-bye, Shuffle, and I shall thank you to call and settle for that there pair of boots. Come, my good woman, give us your hand. Good-bye, my pretty lass," nodding to me, as he and his better half quitted the coach.

Nothing of very great interest occurred during the remainder of our journey, except that Shuffle seemed disposed to hire Pat as his servant. The Frenchman found fault with everything at table, drank *eau sucré*, and studied in his dictionary. The lady in the green habit scorned to address even a single syllable to a person in the humble garb I wore, and I never once opened my lips till we arrived at Oxford, and I was set down at a little inn nearly a mile distant from the one where Worcester promised to wait for me. It was almost one o'clock in the morning, it poured with rain, and there was not a star to enliven a poor traveller!

Though the discovery was too late, it was now very evident that I had taken my place in the wrong coach. What was to be done? I inquired the distance of the inn at which Worcester promised to expect me; but, for more than a quarter of an hour, everybody seemed too busy, looking after the luggage and the passengers, to attend to a poor girl in a coarse red cloak. At last I contrived to speak to the landlady, who assured me that I must

be mad to think of wandering about the streets of Oxford at such an hour, and in such weather; that the passengers always used her house, and that in the course of an hour the other passengers would be served, and then the chambermaid would see about providing me with a bed.

"Impossible!" said I, "for I have a person waiting for me at the Crown Inn, and I shall feel much obliged to you, madam, if you will immediately furnish me with a guide to protect me."

"Protect a fiddlestick!" said my landlady. "I've got no time to procure guides at this time of night, indeed"; and she waddled after the rest of the passengers.

I was left alone in the passage, to watch my travelling box, shivering with cold, and wishing the vile red cloak and blue stockings at the bottom of the Red Sea, since it was to them I was indebted that everybody held me in such contempt. As a last resource, I addressed myself to a man in a dirty smock-frock, who I imagined to be the ostler.

"My good man, where can I procure a safe guide and protector, to walk with me to the Crown Inn?"

"You'd better wait here till to-morrow morning, my dear," answered the man; "for you see it's quite at t'other end of the town, and a man don't care to get wet for nothing."

"But I will give you half a crown, and thank you too, if you will only come with me directly, and bring a lanthorn with you."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the man, incredulously. "Pray how comed you to be so rich, hey? Suppose you shew us your half-crown."

"Willingly," said I, taking one out of my little bag, at the sight of which he begged me to wait outside the door till he joined me, from the stable, with his lanthorn.

"But you must step out foot, my dear, as I may get home before mistress misses me, you see."

As we hurried on together, while the rain fell in torrents on our heads, I felt half afraid of my strange guide; and asked him every two minutes, if he was quite sure he had not mistaken the road?

"No, child," said he at last, "for here we be safe and sound· This be the Crown Inn."

I was not long in doubt as to the truth of what he said; for, at the door, stood Worcester, as large as life, looking eagerly down the road after the carriages. I put my half-crown into my guide's hand, and hastily placed my arm under that of Worcester, who so little dreamed of seeing me arrive on foot, in such a wet miserable condition, that he pushed me rather roughly on one side.

"My dear Mr. Dobbins," said I, for that was the name we were to go by at the Crown, where he believed he was not personally known; "Mr. Dobbins! don't you recognise your dear Mrs. Dobbins?"

"Good God, my love! how came you alone, this miserable night?" and Worcester handed me upstairs, all joy, and rapture, and trembling anxiety lest I should catch cold. In less than a quarter of an hour, thanks to his good care, I was in a warm bed, and an excellent supper was served by the side of it, with good claret, fruit, coffee, and everything we could possibly require.

We talked all night long; for we had much to say to each other.

Worcester declared that he looked forward to no hope nor rest, until we should be really married.

I entreated him to consider all the inconveniences of such a match. "Your father never will forgive you, remember!"

"That I shall deeply regret," answered His Lordship; "but I must and will choose my own partner for life. You and I have passed weeks, months, years, together, without having had a single quarrel. This is proof positive, at least, that out tempers harmonise perfectly together, and I conceive that harmony of temper between man and wife is the first and greatest blessing of the wedded state."

I was too frank to deny that I perfectly agreed with him, in this particular.

"I was never happy till I knew you," continued Worcester, "and I am sure, as I am of my existence, that you are the only woman on earth to whom I could ever be constant to the end of

my life, and not break my oath. When all is over, my father must submit to necessity."

"It may not be," said I, mildly. "Nay, it shall not be. Your parents, harsh as they are towards me and my faults, shall not have cause to curse me, neither shall you."

Worcester was greatly agitated; and, when all else failed, tried to laugh me out of my resolution. "We will go to Scotland together, in the mail," said His Lordship.

"And who shall be the father to give me away, and be a witness to prove my marriage?" I asked, merely to make a joke of a subject I was tired of treating seriously.

"You shall wear this pretty dress," said Worcester, "and my coachman, Boniface, shall come down to the North with us, to give you away. I dare not trust Will Haught; he shall know nothing of our departure till he has missed us."

"Boniface, of course, must be gaily dressed," said I, "and wear a large nosegay."

"True," proceeded Worcester, "and a white waistcoat."

"Shall the waistcoat be made with pockets and flaps, pray?"

"Why, perhaps that might look handsomer."

"Very well," said I, "perhaps pockets and flaps, perhaps not. Let the matter rest for the moment, and now, with regard to this long journey to Gretna Green, to look for a dirty blacksmith, I think that really will be unnecessary."

"How can it be avoided, till I am of age?" Worcester eagerly inquired.

"Why, I have spoken to that most reverend, pious, and learned divine, Lord Frederic Beauclerc, on this important subject, and he declares himself willing to officiate on this occasion, and marry us, privately, by special licence, provided you agree to grant him *les droits du seigneur*."

Worcester inquired what that meant.

"Simply, *les droits du mari* for the first night."

Worcester having by this time discovered that I was only laughing at him, appeared deeply wounded and offended with me.

"My love, what is to be done?" I asked. "I, as your friend, your real friend, wish you to be comfortably reconciled to your parents, and, by making me your wife, you lose them for ever, without doing me any material good; for I have no ambition, nor hankering after rank, and, I confess, my conscience does not reproach me with any particular crime, attached to my present quiet mode of life, since I have no children; else I should, for their sake, judge differently. Let us hope the best, enjoy the present, and be merry, pray, or I might as well have remained in town."

By degrees Worcester recovered his spirits, and, perhaps there never was an hour, during our whole acquaintance, in which he was so devoted to me, so madly, passionately fond of me, as during my visit to the Crown Inn, which proves how the passion of love is ever increased by difficulties, till it, at last, acquires such a degree of enthusiastic ardour, as persons in the full, easy possession of what they desire can form not the least conception of.

Alas! how fleeting are our moments of happiness! Poor Worcester was obliged to leave me by nine in the morning, after handing me into a hack-chaise; because he could not bear the idea of my being again addressed by any low man who might happen to be my fellow traveller, when my dress would induce them to mistake me for a servant.

Just as I had got about a mile from Oxford, one of Worcester's uncles passed my chaise: if I recollect right, it was Lord Edward. He stared at me, in my odd costume, as though I had been the ninth wonder of the world. However, I hoped, since I had never in my life spoken to His Lordship, and merely guessed him to be a Somerset, that he would have remained at least in some little doubt as to my identity.

The next morning's post convinced me of my mistake. Worcester, in a very long dismal letter, acquainted me that I had been seen in a very odd unladylike kind of dress, close to Oxford. Worcester assured his father that it was quite impossible, as I certainly should not have gone to Oxford without

acquainting him of the circumstance. The Duke and Duchess condescended to laugh at him as a weak, silly dupe to a vile and profligate woman; asked him what good he fancied I could be doing, by travelling about in disguise? and why, if it had been good, I looked so confused, and appeared so anxious to hide my face from his uncle, as to have actually covered it with both my hands? His uncle further declared that I was both deformed and ugly, which rendered his infatuation the more absurd.

Worcester, in reply, declared his aunt so very ugly, that the man who had chosen her for his wife, must for ever give up all pretensions to taste; and then he asked them why they imagined two of the handsomest men of this, and perhaps of any age, Lord Ponsonby and the Duke of Argyll (my readers must excuse my placing Lord Ponsonby first) should have been so much in love with deformity? and, if they were, it was, of course, a proof that my mind must have been of that superior cast, as made ample amends for the defects of my person.

There were two young men, at that time, on a visit with Her Grace of Beaufort, who is known to have always encouraged a very motherly kindness of feeling towards young men, particularly when they were well looking. Perhaps she wanted them for her daughters; and yet, that beauty soon fades, is the cry of most moral mammas. However that may be, and I have not in the least presumed to entertain a doubt of Her Grace's virtue, according to the English acceptation of that word; the two young men I have just now mentioned, and who so vehemently joined the hue and cry against me, were, Montagu, the eldest son of a lady in Portman Square, who used to give charitable dinners to the poor chimney-sweepers once a year, and Mr. Meyler, a young Hampshire gentleman, in the possession of very large West India property, of at least five and twenty thousand a year.

This youth had lately become of age, and, as everybody informed me, was very handsome. Worcester assured me that this young sugar-baker, as Lord Alvanly was pleased to call him, expressed himself in such strong terms of disgust, in

reference to me, that His Lordship had been obliged to desire him never to use my name in his presence again.

Meyler, however, *dédommagé*'d himself with his favourite, the Duchess of Beaufort, to whom Worcester had presented him when they were both at Christchurch together. He always agreed with that lady, as to the subjugation of her noble son's superior parts; "for," said Meyler, "it would be impossible for any man, in his right senses, to be in love with that woman called Harriette Wilson; she may have been better once; but she is now in ill health, spoiled by flattery, and altogether the most disgusting style of woman I know."

"Are you acquainted with her, then?" asked the Duchess.

Meyler confessed he had never spoken to me; but added that he saw me every night in my opera box, and in the round room afterwards; and, in short, from having often conversed with my acquaintances, he knew just as much about me, as if he had been so unfortunate as to have been personally acquainted with me.

This inveterate abuse from a stranger, whom I did not even know by sight, somewhat excited my curiosity, nay, more, my emulation perhaps: *car j'avais quelque fois le diable au corps, comme aucune autre.*

"If," said I one day to Fanny, "if all this abuse of me could be reconciled to good taste in a gentleman, and this Meyler is really so handsome, it would be worth while changing his dislike into love, *seulement pour lui apprendre à vivre.* At all events, there is novelty in being an object of disgust to any man, just when Worcester has so cloyed me with sweets! Where can one get a sight of Meyler?"

"Sir John Boyd is a relation or particular friend of his," said Fanny; and, on the first opportunity, Sir John was consulted.

"No woman can do anything with Meyler, in the way of love," said Sir John; "for Meyler really don't know what sentiment means, and that is why I cannot conceive what he is always doing with that fine strapping woman, the Duchess of Beaufort, who appears never so happy nor so comfortable, as when he is perched upon a high stool by her side. Meyler is a

mere animal, a very handsome one, it is true, and there is much natural shrewdness about him, besides that he is one of the most gentlemanlike young men I know; but you may read his character in his countenance."

"What is that like?" I asked.

"It is beautiful," said Sir John Boyd, "and so peculiarly voluptuous that, when he looks at women, after dinner, although his manner is perfectly respectful, they are often observed to blush deeply, and hang down their heads, they really cannot tell why or wherefore."

"And who does he love?" I inquired.

"His affections are, I believe, at this moment, divided between a Mrs. Bang, a Mrs. Patten, and a Mrs. Pancrass, all ladies of Covent Garden notoriety. Meyler is a hard drinker, and a very hard rider, and a good tennis and cricket player, prides himself on his Leicestershire stud, and his old English hospitality, and he is no fool, though he hates reading; and that is all I know about him, except that I don't believe he would like to be constant for a single fortnight to the most lovely or accomplished woman on earth. In short, he holds all women very cheap, and considers them as mere instruments of pleasure, with the exception of the Duchess of Beaufort, whom he calls a paragon."

"*En voilà assez*," said I, "*de votre bel sauvage*. Perhaps you will show him to me some day, not on Ludgate Hill, but at the opera?"

CHAPTER XVII

THINGS went on worse and worse at Badminton, and I was now delighted that they did so, being altogether most miserably tired of the Beaufort story.

The Duke of Beaufort, at last, sent a notorious swindler of his acquaintance, who has since been confined in chains for forgery, one Mr. Robinson, who, as I have heard, had long been in the habit of doing dirty jobs for noblemen. Robinson declared that I had it in my power considerably to relieve the anxiety and distress of mind to which I had reduced the Beaufort family, by returning all letters in my possession, containing promises of marriage made by the Marquis of Worcester to myself.

"In short," said Robinson, "if you will take an oath, at Westminster Hall, that you have delivered into mine, or His Grace of Beaufort's hands, every letter, or copy of a letter, from Worcester, now in your possession, you may make your own terms with His Grace."

Though I never cared for myself, and I am afraid I never shall, yet, when one is dealing with a notorious rogue, it seems silly to become his dupe: I therefore requested to have a week allowed me to decide. This time being granted me, because I would have it so, I consulted a most respectable counsellor, Thomas Treslove, Esq. of Old Square, Lincoln's Inn, who had been acquainted with my family when I was quite a child and living with my parents.

Mr. Treslove, after reading Lord Worcester's letters, containing his repeated and solemn promises of marriage, at my particular request, declared, what I have no doubt he is ready,

this day, to repeat, merely that he conceived the letters, if brought into a court of law, to be worth twenty thousand pounds to me, and, when I afterwards consulted Henry Brougham, Esq. M.P. of the same place, he entirely agreed, in opinion, with Mr. Treslove.

I inquired whether my situation, previous to my having been under the protection of Lord Worcester, made any difference?

"The court would not discuss that point, nor take it into the smallest consideration for or against you," said Mr. Treslove. "You have, for anything which can be proved to the contrary, in all probability been prevented from establishing yourself eligibly or comfortably in life, by having received the most solemn promises of marriage from the Marquis of Worcester. If, from the extreme generosity of your disposition, you, instead of hurrying the thing forward, wished His Lordship to take time for consideration, you have the stronger claim on that family, supposing them to be people of honour. The Duke has no witness of your having ever refused the Marquis; on the contrary, you tell me, His Grace will not believe a single syllable of the matter. Lord Worcester has, by the dates of these letters, been pledging his faith to you for the space of two years; and, I conceive, the damages, if he should now declare off, would be rated, at least, at twenty thousand pounds!"

The next day I had a second interview with Mr. Robinson, to whom I repeated the opinion of Counsellor Treslove, and assured him that gentleman was ready to put it in writing, if necessary.

Robinson said that it would not be required; for the Duke expected all this, and indeed he thought I might make better terms, without exposing the secrets of a noble family in a public Court of Justice.

I promised Mr. Robinson that His Grace should receive my decided answer by the next day's post.

Robinson said this would not be regular, and it had better pass through his hands.

I begged to be excused, declaring that I must and would

manage matters in my own way; and Mr. Robinson was at length compelled to leave me, although in a very ill humour.

The following morning Worcester arrived in town, with the Duke and Duchess of Beaufort. Those worthy parents had again adopted the pathetics, finding it impossible to manage Worcester in any other way.

"My poor father is very wretched," said Worcester, "and my mother, when I left the house this morning, was almost in hysterics, because I will not consent to go abroad without you; and I never can nor will attempt it."

"Do you think they would feel happier if they were in possession of your promises of marriage?" I inquired.

"Certainly," answered Worcester. "His Grace would, in fact, make any sacrifice to obtain them, though in the end, they could not serve his wishes, since I will never give up the hope and full expectation of becoming your husband."

Poor Duke! said I, musing to myself, after Worcester had left me, on the pomps and vanities of this wicked world. I have perhaps, though very innocently, been the cause of much uneasiness to him. Not that this matter is quite certain either; for Worcester might have, by this time, completely involved his father's estate. It had, indeed, been his wish to do this, but that I laboured to prevent him, and he is now only a few thousands in debt, owing to the very small allowance his father makes him. I have never done the Duke or his family any real injury, and I never will; nay, I should like to prove myself anxious for their happiness, only their all being so severe upon me, and so very abusive, is such a damper. I will make the Duke of Beaufort like me, and regret his former severity, continued I, opening my writing desk, and after five minutes more deliberation, I addressed a letter to His Grace of Beaufort, as nearly as I can recollect, in these words:

Your Grace has been very severe on me and my errors; but, if you imagine they are of a nature to destroy domestic comfort, I can easily forgive all the very harsh expressions which yourself, as well as Her Grace, in letters I have seen of her own writing, made use of

on my subject. I will venture to remind your Grace that I was very far from seeking the acquaintance of your son. In short, but for such perseverance as I have seldom witnessed, I had never placed myself under his protection. I knew not that in doing so I was likely to destroy the peace of any human being. In short, if I had not respected yours, I had long since become your daughter-in-law. Having now inspired Lord Worcester with a very strong affection, something is surely due to him, from gratitude, neither would my conscience acquit me if, out of respect for the parent I never saw, I were to act with inhumanity towards the son who would sacrifice all for me. I have pledged myself solemnly not to desert him at present; but, what I can do, in perfect good faith to Worcester, I am very anxious to perform, for the relief of his noble father's mind. I will not sell the proofs of respect and affection which have been generously tendered to me; but, as I conceive they cannot be put to better account than that of relieving the anxiety of a father's mind, I have the greatest pleasure in forwarding them to your Grace, and am ready to take any oath that you may require, as to my having now enclosed you the whole of Lord Worcester's correspondence in my possession or power. All I ask in return, is to be considered by your Grace with somewhat less of ill-will, and that for your own sake, as well as that of the Duchess, you will feel some confidence in the goodness of my heart, in the sincere wish I do, in truth, feel, that your son may turn out all and everything you can desire.

Only point out what I can do more, for the tranquillity of Lord Worcester's parents, which shall not become a breach of faith and humanity towards himself, and I declare to your Grace that you shall never see me hesitate, from anything like a selfish motive. I have the honour to remain, with sincere wishes for the happiness of Lord Worcester's parents,

Your Grace's most obedient,
and very humble servant,

HARRIETTE WILSON.

His Grace of Beaufort never, in any way, condescended to

acknowledge the receipt of this letter, which I carried myself, and left with his porter in Grosvenor Square; yet the Beauforts were ever a high-bred race! but I conclude high-bred and well-bred must be two things, for it never could be well-bred of His Grace to refuse to acknowledge the above, to say nothing of the extreme selfishness and want of feeling of the noble Duke, who, having obtained what he wished for the present, returned to Badminton, to which place he insisted on Worcester again accompanying him.

During another month, Worcester declared to me that his parents, relatives, and his father's friends, tormented him beyond his patience; and that young Meyler had begged him to leave me, as though he had been begging for his life, humbly entreating him to forgive the liberty he took with him, which alone arose out of his brotherly affection and respect for the Duchess, etc.

Worcester generally contrived to get over to London every two or three days, though but for a few hours; and, when that was impossible, I met him at a village ten miles on this side of Brighton.

One morning I received a letter from Worcester, so blotted over, from one end to the other, that it was scarcely legible, and some parts appeared actually to have been defaced by tears. Such an incoherent scrawl I never had known him, nor anybody else, write before! It was all over wives and angels, and eternal constancy, and eternal despair!! with miseries and tortures without end. In short, it was out of all compass miserable, and out of all rules, or direct right angles, or parallel lines. All I could make out of this scrawl, as certain, was that Lord Wellington, at the request of Worcester's father, who had made it without his son's knowledge, had appointed him his aide-de-camp, and that go he must; for there was no remedy, or it would be called cowardice, if he hesitated. Nevertheless, he had sworn not to leave London, unless he had been allowed to pass a whole fortnight, entirely, with me. This had been granted, and I was to expect him in two days after the receipt of his letter, which

ended with earnest entreaties that I would promise to accompany him to the continent; and, lastly, His Lordship informed me that his father would arrive in London, on the same morning with his letter, for the express purpose of attending a levee, and demanding a private audience of his present Majesty, to beg permission for Worcester to leave his regiment, and join the Duke of Wellington in Spain.

I knew not, nor had ever suspected, how much Worcester's loss would affect me, until there was no remedy, and my case desperate, for well I knew that I should never be permitted to follow up the army in Spain, even had I been disposed to make the attempt. I burst into a violent flood of tears.

It now struck me very forcibly, that Worcester had deserved all my devoted attachment, and that I had not been half grateful enough to him. That he would lose his life in Spain, I felt convinced, and that since his regiment remained in England, I should have his blood on my head. What was to be done? My crimson velvet pelisse, trimmed with white fur, and also my white beaver hat, with the charming plume of feathers, were spread out in my dressing-room, ready for Hyde Park, and conquests!! and poor Worcester, perhaps, might soon be numbered with the dead! food for worms!!

After a second flood of tears!! on went the red pelisse and charming white hat, and, in less than half an hour, behold me standing at the Duke of Beaufort's street door, awaiting the answer to my humble, single rap, with a little note in my hand, containing these few words, addressed to the Duke.

I earnestly entreat your Grace to permit me to speak a few words to you before you attend the levee this morning.

Your most obedient, humble servant,

HARRIETTE WILSON.

When His Grace's huge, fat porter opened the door, I made a desperate effort to conceal my tears, which had been flowing in abundance ever since I had read poor Worcester's letter, just as if I had received his dying speech; and I delivered my little note,

requesting to be allowed to wait for the Duke's answer. The porter looked on me suspiciously: he seemed to be considering His Grace of Beaufort's moral character, as his eye glanced from my face downward, as though it had struck him as just possible that I might have come, thus unattended, for the purpose of swearing a child against his noble master.

"Are you quite certain that it is the Duke himself you want to see, and not the young Marquis?"

I assured him that I wished much either to see the Duke, or to receive an answer to my note.

As the man again looked under my large beaver bonnet, I felt the tears gush into my eyes.

"His Grace shall have the note directly," said the porter, in a tone of compassion, observing how I was trembling, as I really half expected the Duke of Beaufort would order one or two of his tall footmen to put me on the other side of the door. I saw the porter give my note to a servant in livery, desiring him to take it to His Grace's valet.

"The Duke," said the porter, turning to me, "is dressing for the levee; so you had better take a seat."

I did so, and while I was almost choked with the efforts my pride caused me to make, in order to conceal my tears from a parcel of curious, impudent servants, who, for near twenty minutes that I was suffered to remain in the hall, were eyeing me with very impertinent curiosity, the kind porter again addressed me, almost in a whisper, with, "Ma'am, your note has been put into His Grace's own hands, and he is reading on it; so I dare say he will ring his bell, and we shall hear if there is any answer for you."

I waited another quarter of an hour, in a very miserable state of suspense, and in real bodily fear of being kicked out of the house.

At last, as I sat with my handkerchief to my eyes, and my face turned towards the ground, I heard someone, in a mild, gentleman-like voice, call from the bottom of the stairs, to inquire if the person was waiting, who had brought the last

note? I raised my head, and, seeing a handsome-looking man, in a court dress, who appeared to be a very little older than Worcester, I grew brave, as I always do from desperation, conceiving everything was now lost, and that the Duke had descended from his usual dignity, for the purpose of seeing justice done to the orders he was about to issue for my being kicked into the street.

"Did you bring this note, pray?" asked the Duke, addressing me, since his first question had not, it seemed, reached the dull ear of the fat porter.

"I did, your Grace," answered I, firmly.

"Then do me the favour to walk this way," continued the Duke, opening the parlour door, and closing it after him.

"What can he be going to do to me?" thought I, trembling from head to foot.

"My bell was broken," said His Grace, "and, for the last ten minutes, before I came down, I could not make anyone hear; but I assure you that I had no idea that you yourself were waiting in my hall. I conceived it was your messenger."

The least sound of kindness, to one already so very low and nervous, is enough to affect one. The tears I had made such efforts to conceal from the servants would be restrained no longer, and I was not, like the Duchess on a former occasion, almost hysterical, but quite so; and the more I laboured and prayed for calm, the more impossible it was to obtain it; so, as I stood sobbing aloud, in the middle of the Duke's large dining-room, with my handkerchief held to my eyes, the Duke of Beaufort and myself really cut two very pretty figures! ! and I much wish Stockdale would get a print of it!

"I am not aware of your motive, Miss Wilson, for favouring me with this visit," said the Duke.

And, as I attempted to apologise, my tears fell still faster and faster, till they quite choked my voice.

The Duke, seeing that mine was real agitation, and not affectation, condescended to unbend a little.

"Sit down," said His Grace, drawing an easy chair towards

me. "I beg you will sit down and compose yourself, and don't think it necessary to speak till you are more calm. I hope you believe that I felt very much shocked that you should have waited in my hall? upon my honour, I had not a conception of finding you there, when I went downstairs, because I could not make anybody hear."

At length I succeeded in recovering myself, so far as to state to His Grace that, on the receipt of Lord Worcester's letter, I had felt so very much shocked at the idea of being the sole cause of His Lordship being sent into danger, while his regiment remained quietly in England, that, really, I found it impossible to resist making an effort to prevent it, by proposing to His Grace to do all in my power to induce Lord Worcester to consent to our separation; and even if I failed, rather to agree to go abroad myself, and keep my residence a secret from his son, than that he should, for my sake, be exposed to danger.

The Duke declared that even had he been inclined to comply with my request, and he honestly confessed he was not, it was now too late; "and really, Miss Wilson," continued His Grace, "it was, from the first, folly and madness in you ever to have fancied Worcester could or would have made you his wife."

"Your Grace still believes me desirous of the honour I might obtain, by forcing myself on you as your despised relative?" said I, indignation drying up my tears at the idea of being so misunderstood, "and further, you imagine that if I wished, and would consent to marry your son, I should fail to accomplish my designs?"

"Certainly," answered His Grace, proudly.

"Duke!" said I, fixing my eyes mildly, but firmly, on his face, "you neither deceive me nor yourself by that assertion, for you know the contrary. I am——" and I felt my heart swell with something between grief and indignation, "I am," I continued, "naturally good, but you will, among you, harden my heart till it becomes cold and vicious. Since nothing generous, and no sacrifice, on my part, is understood or felt, even when I would serve others, and while I only think of them, you will not, or you

cannot understand me. Allow me, then, to tell you the fault is in your own character; I will not say in your heart, but in your want of heart."

The Duke, being of gentlemanly manners, to give everybody their due, sought to appease matters a little.

"I did not mean to hurt your feelings, I assure you," said His Grace, "perhaps I expressed myself improperly. I only wanted to observe to you that such unequal marriages are seldom, if ever, attended with happiness to either party, as witness Lord Egremont, and several more I could name."

"Do not trouble yourself, Duke, since I am, and I always was, determined not to marry your son; upon my word, I am; and, if you again give me the lie, or speak to me as though you entirely disbelieved this positive assurance, which has been repeated to your son so often, while on his knees he has implored me to become his wife, I shall say you do so because I am a woman, and cannot call you to account for it. Your Grace would use more ceremony with a man; but my object for the great presumption of thus intruding on you, was the hope of being able to suggest some plan which would render it unnecessary for Lord Worcester to join the Duke of Wellington's staff. You have answered me on that subject, and I have now the honour to take my leave of your Grace."

"Not yet," said the Duke. "Pray stay till you are more tranquil. Shall I get you a glass of water?"

I declared it was unnecessary; but he insisted on my waiting, while he himself went into his dressing-room to procure one.

"Now I hope you are quite convinced that your being left in my hall was contrary to my knowledge, and gives me real concern?" said the Duke, after I had swallowed the glass of water he presented to me.

I bowed in acknowledgment of this apology. "I have spoken to Lord Worcester's father for the first and, in all human probability, for the last time in my life," said I, feelingly; because I really, for Worcester's sake, felt a regard and respect towards his father, at that time.

"And if it should happen so?" inquired the Duke of Beaufort.

"Will your Grace shake hands with me?" said I, timidly, and without presuming to offer my hand.

"With great pleasure," answered the Duke, and, after shaking hands, rather cordially, he himself conducted me into the hall, and called loudly to the porter to attend and open the door for me.

Worcester came to town on the following morning, and all the Duchess could say or do, Worcester insisted on passing the whole of every day with me.

"My Lord," Will Haught would say through the key-hole of our bedroom, "my Lord, the Duchess desired me to tell you that she has a great deal of business to settle with you, to-day, about, in short, about all manner of things, my Lord."

"Very well, that is enough, Will," His Lordship would answer.

In another hour this torment would knock again.

"My Lord, Her Grace looked rather displeased this morning. The Duchess was almost in a passion."

"You be d——d! go along!" was the elegant reply.

"My Lord, in another hour, you see I'm tired of standing in this here room, and the Duchess this morning—I assure you, my Lord—your Lordship knows what I mean, Her Grace had got a very particular look in her face; you know, my Lord, how she looks when she's vexed like, and takes on, you know, my Lord."

"Go to hell!" vociferated Worcester, from the emergency of the case, although he had by no means the habit of swearing.

"I'm going, my Lord," answered Will Haught.

Everything was arranged, in a week, for my accompanying Worcester to Spain. My female attendant was hired, and my trunks really ready; but, as new objections continually offered themselves to this plan, Worcester was reduced almost to despair, and looked so miserably ill that everybody he met made the observation.

The army was not expected to be stationary. If I remained at

Lisbon, I should see no more of him than by remaining in London. The misery, expense, and privations, perhaps insults, I must endure in my attempt to follow the army, could scarcely be surmounted; and Worcester could not deny that I should make a coward of him; that fight he could not, supposing I might be suffering under sickness or difficulty. At last it was finally decided between us as a thing impossible. We must then be separated for one year, since there is no remedy; "but," said Worcester, "I shall declare to my father that, at the end of that time, we will part no more. He has implored me to make a trial of a year's absence, and I have consented; but in twelve months from the day I leave you, supposing I am not on my road to join you in England, remember you are to come to me."

This I promised, should the thing be practicable.

At all events, no power on earth, he solemnly vowed and declared a thousand times over, and as solemnly wrote it down, that neither man nor devil should separate us longer than twelve months, during which time my last kiss was to be virgined on his true lip.

"If ever you prove false to me, or I to you, let all inconstant men be called Ponders, and all false women, Cressids," said Worcester, or he ought to have said so. In short, he spoke to this effect, only he spoke more strongly; for, in his zeal, I believe he hoped we might both go where he had sent Will Haught, if ever we were inconstant; and yet he was leaving his beloved, surrounded with flatterers and spies of the Duke, in the gay city of London.

"Never mind, my love," said I, "for, if my residing in the metropolis makes you miserable, I'll go and bury my wonderful charms in a village, and so immortalise it for ever!"

But Worcester declared that all the comfort he was capable of feeling, at that moment, was in my honour.

"*Mais, ne sais-tu pas que je l'ai perdu?*" I inquired.

"*N'importe. Si je place ma confiance, mon ange! c'est en toi,*" said Worcester.

All this joking, on serious and affecting matters, is really in

monstrously bad taste! I cannot conceive how I can be guilty of such heartless unfeeling behaviour! I, who condoled so pathetically both in the crim. con. cases of Lord Boringdon, whom Ponsonby used to call the Boring Don, and Sir William Abdy, when those excellent and abused husbands took their tea with me, expressly, as they both declared, because I was a woman of such acute feelings; but, after all, being now in the daily habit of meeting this profligate Marquis of Worcester about Paris, with the sister of his late wife, and seeing him look as if he did not even know me by sight, while I often forget, until he has passed, where or when I have seen that man before, the face being familiar, and perhaps the name even forgotten—Oh, by-the-bye! I say to myself, if I meet him a second time in the same morning, now I think of it, that long-nosed, tall man is Worcester. And just in this way does his own treacherous memory, no doubt, treat his own dearest dear! own beloved! ever adored, and ever to be adored! delicious! sweet! darling! wife! Harriette.

Tant ces choses la fache, quand on y pense! mais ainsi va le monde! C'est dommage! ! Quoi faire? and how can one write pathetically on such trifling subjects? but nevertheless, I beg my readers to understand and believe that, though I was never in love with Worcester, in my whole life, yet I was, at one time, much too grateful, and too much attached to him, ever to feel the slightest wish to be unfaithful, even in thought, and, with his ardour on one side, and my friendly civility on the other, we certainly jogged on very well together; for I am, as I believe all my friends will admit, so warm-hearted, naturally, that my mere friendship is quite a match for many women's love. I am sure I always folded Worcester's neck handkerchiefs for him, with my own fair hands, because he declared nobody else understood them: and besides this, I, every Monday morning of my life, read the housemaid a lecture about keeping his dressing-room free from dust! *Qu'est-ce qu'il voulait donc?*

Worcester declared that he would not leave me, until his father would make me an allowance, at least, during his absence

from England. For this purpose, about three days previous to his departure, he brought Mr. Robinson, as he said, from the Duke of Beaufort.

Robinson declared that anything Worcester could sign, by way of annuity or allowance, would be good for nothing; "but," he continued, "I am come to pass my word, in the Duke's name, that the allowance Worcester requires for you, shall be paid to you, in regular quarterly payments, after all your house debts, etc. have been discharged."

"Of course, Worcester, I may trust to this assurance made in your presence?" I inquired.

Worcester was sure his father would act up to his engagements, and I, being in grief, and naturally careless in money matters, believing, too, that I was in the power of gentlemen, and gentlemen of strict honour, assured them I was under no alarm, and never expected to be left to starve, while I endeavoured to do my duty, and then the subject dropped.

On the last day we passed together, we certainly shed a superabundance of tears. Poor Worcester was half blinded with his: and, seriously, a man going to be hanged could not well have appeared more discouraged or dismayed.

"I will write at least a quire of foolscap to you every day," said Worcester, "and may God bless my adored wife, and bless me only just as I am found ready to sacrifice my life for her happiness." In short, but for Lord William Somerset, who absolutely dragged him out of the house a few minutes before the Falmouth mail started, I almost believe he would have preferred love to glory, and given old Wellington the slip.

I passed the night entirely without rest, in spite of all the efforts I made to recover my spirits. He is gone. Nothing can bring him back. Well, should he not be killed, it is a good thing for a young man to see a little service. It won't do for me to lose all my life in fretting: and fifty more such wise remarks did I repeat to myself, and yet I could not forget poor Worcester's extreme kindness and attachment.

In two days more I was visited by Robinson, who used every

argument in his power, to convince me of the folly of ever expecting to live with Worcester again.

"Why not act with common sense?" said Robinson. "There is His Grace of Beaufort ready to provide for you, in the most comfortable manner possible, for your whole life, in short, as I told you before, you may make your own terms, conditionally, that you never speak or write to His Lordship again."

I begged Mr. Robinson not to lose his time in teasing me when I was out of spirits. "Pray acquaint the Duke that Worcester refused to leave England until I had solemnly pledged myself to write to him constantly, and wait for him a year, from the day of his departure, and then tell me if the Duke commands me to break my written oath, and ill-use his son?"

"If he does, will you do it?" Robinson asked but considering this an impertinent question, I refused to answer it, and again the worthy man went away, in a very ill humour, declaring that, for his part, he could not treat with me.

CHAPTER XVIII

FANNY was my constant visitor after Worcester had left England, and did all in her power to amuse and enliven me. Worcester had promised to make the acquaintance of Colonel Parker, in Spain, and send her word how he went on, who he made love to, and, in short, all the news about him he could possibly scrape together. Fanny was very grateful to His Lordship, for having, himself, suggested this plan to her. She was still living with Julia, and Julia was yet beloved and adored by Mr. Napier, who might have been her son in point of age and appearance.

My opera box had been engaged for that season, and paid for, before Lord Worcester thought of being ordered off to the continent, and Fanny and Julia had each of them purchased a ticket from me; yet I did not like the idea of going there without His Lordship. I knew I should feel dull, and that the Duke and Duchess, whose box was opposite mine, would make their observations on whatever I did, and might report mere nothings in a way to disturb poor Worcester's feelings.

"I will not go to-night," said I, in answer to Julia's pressing entreaties, and I kept my word.

I received, by the earliest occasion, a very long letter, dated Falmouth, from Lord Worcester, who regretted, of all things, being detained, perhaps for several days longer, in England. To be still in the same country with his adored beautiful wife, and yet know that we could not again meet for a year, was what affected him, more than he could possibly describe, etc., but, really, love-letters are all so much alike that it may be as well to refer my readers to Mr. Charlton's, or to those Lord Charles Bentinck addressed to Lady Abdy, they being already printed

and published, and, consequently, come-at-able by all my gentle readers.

The following Saturday's opera was expected to be unusually brilliant. All the fashionable world was in town: there was a new ballet, too, and a new French dancer; and Fanny declared it to be the height of folly to have paid two hundred guineas for an opera box without making use of it.

"Well," said I, "since Worcester cannot well be shot by the enemy previous to his reaching headquarters, I may as well take the opportunity of seeing two or three more ballets; for, as to indulging in gaieties while a parcel of shots are flying about his head or across his brain, is not in my nature." This last was, by-the-bye, a very foolish idea, but a nervous woman will often fancy impossibilities, and that was my case. However, I determined to cut all public amusements as soon as I knew Worcester to be in contact with the enemies of old England.

We were all three unusually well dressed on that evening; for our finery was new, and we humbly hoped in very good taste. On this night, too, I may say, without flattering myself, that there was no lack of humble servants, and devoted pretenders, among the gentlemen in waiting, who crowded about me, believing, of course, that, in the absence of my jealous Lord, it would be no difficult matter to obtain favour in my sight, and, whether I was the style of woman they liked, or just the reverse, still it was always worth while cutting out a man who had been so proverbially in love as Worcester. No doubt, argued such tasteless beings, who, for their own part, saw nothing at all remarkable about me, no doubt, she must improve, wonderfully, on acquaintance: at all events, it is worth trying what she is like. In short, if it had been to have turned my head by flattery, *il y avait vraiment de quoi*; and it has been remarked by several persons in high life, who knew the world well, that it would have been easy for me to have secured, at that period, not less than a dozen annuities.

Amy was rather gay too that season, in her box next to mine, and the Honourable Berkeley Paget had cut his wife and all his

family to accompany her, by her particular desire, about the streets and in all public places. In short, he lived in the same house with her, and seldom quitted her for an instant. Everybody cried out shame, and some few, such very moral men as the Duke of York, actually cut him dead, and refused to receive him at Oatlands, even on public nights: for, beyond all doubt, a man ought to be of royal blood before he presumes to commit adultery, except in private, like Lords Cowper and Maryborough.

Fanny and Julia were both looking remarkably well, and many a beau turned his head wishfully towards our box, anxiously waiting to observe a vacancy for one.

Brummell, Lord William Russell, Frederic Bentinck, Lord Molyneux, Captain Fitzclarence, Lord Fife, Duc de Berri, Montagu, Berkeley Craven, and a great many more were visitors.

A young man whose name I have forgotten came to request the favour of being allowed to present Mr. Meyler to me.

This Meyler was the young, rich, Hampshire gentleman who, Worcester assured me, had professed to entertain such a violent dislike towards me. Both Fanny and I at once concluded that he wanted to come to me as a spy, either at his favourite the Duchess of Beaufort's suggestion, or his own.

"Don't see him," said Fanny, "I am sure he will make mischief."

For my part, as I have before informed my readers, *j'avais, de tems en tems, le diable au corps*, and I liked the description of Sir John Boyd had given me of that young gentleman's style of beauty and expression; and I was, besides, rather curious to see how such a man would set about disliking me! and I wished the Duchess to be aware that I was not to be had. No doubt, thought I, since Meyler is such a mere profligate, he proposes succeeding with me at once, merely to laugh at me afterwards, and acquaint Worcester what a loose woman I am. He may not be aware that I know him to be the friend of Worcester's family.

Having made all these wise reflections to myself, while the

young man chatted with Julia, I addressed him to inquire what sort of a person he intended introducing to me?

"Oh, a charming, beautiful youth, whom all the ladies are in love with," was the reply; and I desired him to bring Mr. Meyler to me immediately.

He took me at my word, and soon returned, to present to our notice a man, certainly of very interesting appearance, and with a most expressive countenance. His manner too was particularly unaffected and gentlemanlike, and the tones of his voice were very sweet: nevertheless, it was easy to discover, in spite of his naturally good breeding, that he held me rather cheap.

In short, to put the idea of respect to me out of the question, he attempted to give me a kiss as we descended the stairs together; but though I refused decidedly, it was done rather coquettishly, on purpose that he might be induced to renew the attack at some future day, with a little more ceremony.

There would be no merit, I thought, for Worcester, or the Duchess, to learn that I had declined giving encouragement to such very abrupt impertinence from a wild young rake who was known to care for no woman breathing beyond the moment.

Meyler is a beautiful creature, thought I to myself, when stepping into bed! I wonder if he ever will really know how to love a woman, during his lifetime? If he were to be in love, what a bright glowing countenance he possesses, for expressing that or indeed any other passion! Still it was all nothing to me. Poor Worcester was going into danger for my sake, and for mine alone, and sure I was as of my life, that it was not in my nature to carry on a sly intercourse with another man; and there was a year to wait, according to my oath, and Meyler in that time would have passed over at least five hundred little caprices—and then, to crown all, he could not endure me, and only visited me for the honourable purpose of proving how very cheap he had held me!

This idea settled me for that night, at least, and I fell asleep without dreaming of Meyler, and awoke almost without recollecting his existence.

At about three o'clock in the day, my servant announced a gentleman, who refused to send up his name, merely saying that he lived in Grosvenor Square, and wanted to speak to me.

I was about to insist on knowing who my visitor was before I admitted him, when the idea struck me as just possible, and I requested he might be shown upstairs.

It was the Duke of Beaufort!

I was surprised at receiving a visit from His Grace, and still more so, when I found that he really had nothing particular to say to me. He hesitated a good deal, looked rather foolish, and wished, for my own sake, as well as his son's, that I would abandon all hopes, and leave off corresponding with his son.

"Duke," said I, interrupting him, "was it not your first and most anxious wish that Worcester should go abroad?"

"It was."

"Well, then, Lord Worcester positively and absolutely refused to leave London, until I had pledged myself, in the most solemn manner, to continue faithfully his, and not place myself under the protection of any other man, for one twelve-month from the day he should leave England. Do you still ask me to break my oath?"

The Duke, from very shame, perhaps, was silent, and stood against my door, fidgeting and hesitating, as though he would have proposed something or other, but that he wanted courage.

After a long pause, he suddenly, and with abruptness, said, "Who makes your shoes?"

I fixed my eyes upon His Grace in unaffected astonishment at this irrelevant question.

"We will say nothing of the feet and the ankles," continued His Grace.

This compliment was so very unlooked for from such a quarter, and struck me so very odd, that I felt myself actually blushing up to the very eyes, and I immediately changed the conversation from my feet and ankles, to the young Marquis and the peninsula war.

His Grace, when he took his leave of me, had made no single

proposal, nor said one single word, which could in any way assist my guess, as to why he did me the honour to call on me.

I received two more very long letters from Falmouth: the last was written in despair, agony of mind! etc. to use Worcester's own words, and put into the post on the very eve of His Lordship's sailing for Lisbon.

On the following Saturday, just as I was seated in my opera box, Meyler occurred to me again, for the first time, and I was rather curious, at least, to know whether he meant to visit me any more. Perhaps I was half desirous that he should. It is true he could be nothing to me, and besides he was so abominably cool and impertinent, and then he had declared that he thought me anything but desirable. Still, I told Fanny, I should like to have one more look at him, before I died or retired into the country, merely to ascertain if the expression of his countenance was really as beautiful as it had struck me to be at first sight.

Fanny declared that it was very wicked of me to wish anything whatever about the matter; but Julia said Meyler had, if possible, a more delicious face than even her own adored Harry Mildmay; and, for her part, she candidly owned he had but once to put the question to her, and alas poor Napier! !

However, Fanny might have spared her sermon, since neither Julia's virtue, nor mine, were put in any sort of danger; for all the notice Meyler took of either of us, was through his opera-glass, as he sat in the Duchess of Beaufort's box.

Considering that, by this time, Meyler really disliked me, I began to sympathise with him in his feelings; and having determined to cut him, wherever we might hereafter meet, I amused myself with talking to half the gay world, careless of everything but time present.

Julia having paid Amy a visit in her box, and mentioned to her that I thought Meyler very beautiful, Amy immediately dispatched the first man she could find, of his acquaintance, to invite him to her supper after the opera.

I declared to Julia, if that was the case, I would not go to

Amy's, as I had taken a disgust at the idea of meeting Mr. Meyler; and I retired to bed immediately on leaving the theatre.

I passed much of my time in scribbling every little event which occurred, to Worcester, and the rest mostly with Fanny and Julia, having changed my residence to one which was within a few doors of Julia's.

Meyler, as Amy afterwards informed us, did not attend to her invitation.

One Tuesday night, as Julia was not ready, nor had even began to dress when I called for her, I went to the opera alone. Judge my surprise, on entering my box, to find the front fully occupied by two immensely fat city-sort of ladies, and an elderly stupid-looking man in powder.

"There must be some mistake, I fancy," said I, civilly.

"How do you mean, madam?" asked the powdered man.

"This is my private box, and you may see my name on the outside of it."

The party, in great haste, produced three bone-tickets, which they had purchased for eight shillings each at Mr. Ebers's.

"They are the three tickets I am in the habit of disposing of every night. Lady Castlereagh does the same thing; but nobody ever thinks of intruding their society on me here. The tickets are sold for the pit."

"For the pit, indeed!" said one of the ladies, with indignation, "the pit! ! who ever heard tell of such a thing? You're much more fitter, ma'am, for aught I know, to go into the pit yourself than we are. Is our dress a pit-dress, or a gallery-dress, ma'am?"

"I fancy, madam, you are thinking of the play or Astley's. You are not accustomed to the opera, I see, or you would not fancy anything too fine for the pit. I assure you, you will all three cut a brilliant figure there," said I.

A little Captain Churchill, of the Guards, came into my box at this moment, and opened his little eyes as wide as his astonishment could stretch them, at seeing my party.

"Mr. Churchill, these two ladies have bought my tickets of Ebers, and they insist on taking up the front of my box."

"Oh madam," said Churchill, addressing the eldest, "you really must not expect to make such a very magnificent appearance, for only eight shillings."

"Silence!" said the fat, powdered gentleman, with dignity, and Churchill stared impudently in his face, and burst out into a laugh.

"This is unwarrantable conduct, sir," said the stranger, "and I must call the box-keeper, if you hinder my whole party from witnessing the performance."

"Excellent! upon my word, capital! We are really very much obliged to you all, for being such monstrous good fun," said Churchill, holding his sides.

"Box-keeper!" roared out the powdered man, and one of them immediately attended his summons. "These people are a great nuisance, box-keeper, and they want to make us believe that we have no right to sit in our own box!"

"Excuse me, sir," said the man, "this box belongs to this lady. It is Miss Wilson's own private property."

"And pray are not these the tickets of this box?" the stranger inquired.

"They certainly are," replied the man, "and I have no right to refuse you admittance; but it is a regular understood thing, when ladies dispose of their tickets, they are for the pit."

"Don't tell me about your regular understood thing," said the enraged gentleman. "We have come up to town on purpose to witness an Italian opera, and we have procured tickets for this box. Now I'll tell you what, young man, if you don't make these people silent, I shall apply to a constable, and have them turned out."

"Oh! how very good!" said Churchill, again laughing, and looking at the party through his glass. "Did you all three come up by steam, or how?"

The box-keeper vainly endeavoured to look serious, while informing them that he really could not take upon himself to request me or my friend to be silent, when we were inclined to converse or laugh in my own box, as it was what everybody did;

and many went there for no other purpose but to chat with their friends.

I requested the box-keeper to send Ebers to me, while the fat ladies were turning up their eyes, and throwing out contemptuous remarks on the man for having attempted to impose on them with such an improbable story as that of people putting themselves to the expense of going to the King's Theatre, when they only wanted to converse, and had no wish to see the performance.

"Let us make ourselves so disagreeable to them that they will be glad to go," said I in French, which language, from their stupid faces, I concluded they had not studied.

"I have been trying that plan for the last ten minutes," answered Churchill; "but how can *la belle Harriette* ever expect to succeed in disgusting others?"

"You shall see," said I, "although I am going to be very vulgar; but the case is desperate, for it is death to be stuck behind these fat people, and I shall be quizzed and laughed at for a month, for changing my two sister-graces, whom I expect every minute, for these two furies." I then fixed my eyes steadily on the ladies' finery, particularly their head-dresses, and, immediately afterwards, chattered and laughed, in order to seem as if I was talking at them, although we never once mentioned them. Then Churchill would take a peep at their feet, and laugh again, louder than ever.

"Insufferably impertinent!" said the youngest lady, fanning herself violently; but still they kept their seats.

Mr. Ebers came into the box to express his regrets; and he did all in his power to convince the ladies that it really was never meant that those who purchased tickets for the night should enter the private boxes of ladies who disposed of their tickets.

"And pray, sir," said the eldest lady, bridling, "do we look like people who would bemean ourselves by going into the pit?"

"Don't let's have no more to do," said the powdered gentleman, pompously. "Mr. Ebers! we request you to prevent this bold young man and woman from making a noise, as we comed

here for to see the opera, not to listen to all the absurd things you choose to tell us. When we want you, we will call on you in your own shop!"

"Do sit down, Mr. Ebers," said I, pointing to a chair, which he accepted for a few moments, merely to repeat his regrets that we had been so intruded upon.

I was now determined to have these people out, *coute qu'il coute*.

"Madam," said I to the ugliest lady, "I take it for granted, from your appearance, that you are a lady of strict virtue."

The woman stared at me!

"Consequently," I continued, "it must be painful for you to continue with a woman so notoriously wicked as I am, and in my private box, too! just as if you were a particular friend of mine."

"Now, Hopkins! what's to be done?" said the two ladies, at once.

"I am not joking, continued I, "as you will soon ascertain beyond a doubt, since I expect the pork merchant with whom I have promised to pass the night, every instant."

"All quite true, madam," said Churchill, quietly, "and farther, I was her companion last night. It was her respect for you, which has made her so very anxious to have you out before she sends for the bottle of brandy she usually takes here; because she is the most violent creature in the world, after she has got a little here," pointing to his forehead.

"Mr. Hopkins! ! come out!" said the ladies, and out they all bundled.

Churchill followed them some paces down the passage, and returned handing in Julia and Fanny.

Fanny could not, for the life of her, help laughing, and yet she was so good, and loved me so dearly, she could not but feel hurt that I had given myself so bad a character.

"Why make yourself out worse than you are?" she asked.

"Never mind, dear Fan, plenty of people are left to make the best of themselves. One wants a little variety in life. Is that

Berkeley Paget, peeping out of Amy's box? why he looks like a schoolmaster of Athens! Oh how beautiful Lady Foley is! as to those vacant Pagets, once is tired of seeing them, they are so proud and stupid. Now I love pride; but hate your Lady Jane Paget's stupidity."

"When do you mean to leave off talking nonsense?" said Fanny.

"As soon as ever Lady Ann Wyndham will deign to lay aside her leopard-fur tippet, with gold tassels, thrown off her bosom, to keep her cold, and her yellow blinds: but look at Her Royal Highness the——of——I thought it was a goldfish."

"Upon my honour she is an odd fish!" said Lord Glengal, who came in time enough to hear my last remark.

Next followed Luttrell, Nugent, Lord William Russell, Clanronald Macdonald, Lord of the Isles, etc., and everybody inquired if I had received any news from the Peninsula, although everybody knew that it was, as yet, impossible; but then people must say something, otherwise they appear so stupid, you know!

At this time, I remember there were at least four men who were, or professed to be, in love with me, and I have forgotten their names; but I may recollect them for my next book.

It is very provoking! One was a bishop's son, and he used to sigh by the hour together. Then there was a little quiz of a lord, or rather an earl, who had long been married to a high-bred foreigner. However, that poor little creature is so afraid of his wife that, if he will only behave decently, I do not mean to publish him. There was the Boring Don also; whom some call Lord Boringdon: but I defy my worst enemy to prove that I was ever false to Worcester, while I pretended to good faith, since it is absolutely impossible.

I passed a merry night, and, as Mr. Nugent was bringing me to a hackney-coach, as carriage was out of the question on the Duke of Beaufort's princely allowance, I observed Mr. Meyler waiting, as if on purpose to speak to me slyly, as I passed just by the Haymarket entrance to the theatre.

And Harriette Wilson had refused to become Marchioness of Worcester, to be waited for, in a corner, by a vile sugar-baker! Oh! ye gods! I wonder I did not drop down dead on the spot! but, as Lord Byron says,

There is no spirit now a days!

so I merely flew into a passion.

Meyler's beautiful dimple, as he smiled on me, did not disarm me in the least.

"Mr. Meyler," said I, *en passant*, "it is not necessary for you to conceal yourself in bye corners, in order to acknowledge me, and for this very simple reason, I wish to be allowed to decline your acquaintance."

"But why?" asked Meyler, following us up.

"Merely that I consider you a dead bore!" I added, as I stepped into the hackney-coach, and was followed by Julia. Fanny had retired early with Colonel Parker.

Nugent directed our coachman to Camden Town, and then wished us a good night; but we had scarcely got clear of the throng of carriages, when we observed a man in silk stockings running after us, bawling to the coachman to stop!

It was Mr. Meyler, who came up to the coach window, quite out of breath, to beg, very earnestly and humbly, that we would permit him to enter the carriage, just for a few moments, while he made his apologies, and explained things.

"It is so perfectly unnecessary, Mr. Meyler, that I hope you will not detain us any longer."

"Mrs. Johnston," said Meyler, addressing Julia, beseechingly, "pray intercede for me. Do pray allow me to speak to you five minutes. You may put me down again at White's, in St. James's Street, if you are tired of me."

"Oh! there can be no harm, since we are two," said Julia.

And in spite of all I could say or do to prevent her, she pulled the check-string, and Meyler seated himself by my side, declaring he was willing to prove at the very next opera, how desirous

and how proud he should feel to acknowledge and protect me there, or anywhere else.

I told him I had merely spoken in haste, as the thing struck me at the moment; that it was forgotten the next, and, if I had been rude, I was ready to apologise, rather than be teased any longer on a subject which must be so uninteresting to all parties. Situated as I was, with his friend Lord Worcester, and being about to retire into Devonshire till His Lordship's return, what was the use of making acquaintances?

"Oh dear," said Julia, "what shall I do?"

"What has happened to you, pray?" I inquired.

"Oh, I am ruined—I shall be ruined! The man will arrest me, for his bill. I had all the trouble in the world to get two twenty-pound notes out of Napier, at the opera to-night, for the purpose of settling his bill with them early in the morning, and they are gone!"

Poor Julia, as she turned over her reticule for the last time, appeared the image of despair. We had only just entered Pall Mall. Meyler, glad to be employed, rather than be turned out altogether, entreated us to wait in the coach, while he ran back to search my box for Julia's banknotes.

Julia, being more in debt than she dared to acquaint her stingy lover, Napier, with; and really dreading the bailiffs every hour of her life, was miserably agitated at this accident; and, being pregnant, as usual, she was seized with violent sickness just as Meyler had left us.

"What will become of me?" said she. "I must drive off directly. I would rather go to prison than disgust that charming young man with my sickness."

I thought it cruel to keep her waiting, since she was so very ill, and therefore, seeing the watchman standing in his box, I offered to let her set me down and drive off without me.

"How can you wait, in this dress, in the middle of the streets?" Julia asked.

I told her I would put my shawl over my head, and present

the watchman with a shilling, desiring his protection for a few seconds, that I might not miss Mr. Meyler with the banknotes.

Julia grew worse, and I made the coachman drive her home without me.

In about ten minutes, Meyler came running towards the spot where I stood, and appeared to be looking eagerly about for our hackney-coach.

"Here, Mr. Meyler," said I, tapping him on the arm.

"No, no, not to-night," said Meyler, pushing me from him without looking at me.

"It is Harriette," said I, and he turned round in much astonishment.

"You here alone?" said Meyler, "good heavens! I beg you ten thousand pardons."

"Julia was seized with such a violent headache and sickness, that it was misery for her to remain an instant; therefore I made her drive home without me."

Meyler was evidently delighted to find me alone, in the streets; but having discovered that nothing was to be done with me, without a little more ceremony than he at first considered would be necessary, he began by expressing his regrets that no money was to be found, and, still more, he lamented having just lent his carriage to Lady Castlereagh.

"How could I be so stupid?" said he: "but you will allow me to set you down, in a hackney-coach?"

"Certainly not," was my reply; and, lest he should again run after me, I declared that, since the evening was so warm and moonlight, I proposed walking home, if he insisted on accompanying me; and we actually walked, full dressed, from Pall Mall to Camden Town! during which said long walk, Meyler endeavoured to make himself as amiable as possible, and took his leave at my door, without teasing me for anything except permission to call on me, some morning.

He was so very pressing that I was, at last, foolish enough to say he might pay me a visit, at Julia's, on the following Thursday; and he left me quite satisfied and delighted, with having obtained

so much more than he had expected from my manner of receiving his advances at the beginning of the evening.

I omitted to acquaint my readers that, just before the departure of Lord Worcester, Her Grace of Beaufort took it into her head to break the seals of my letters. It was very odd that so immaculate a lady could venture to cast her chaste eyes on the private letters of Harriette Wilson—the vile, profligate Harriette Wilson—addressed to her lover! Moreover, it was surely dishonourable and dishonest: at least, it would have been called so if I had done it; and then the Duchess declared to her son that my last letter was such an indecent one, she could not read it, and she proceeded to reason on the immorality of a paragraph at the very bottom of my paper; which proves true the old saying—liars must have good memories.

N'importe!

I called on Julia, the next morning, to acquaint her that I had taken the liberty of inviting Meyler to her house, because I knew it would make Lord Worcester miserable if I were to receive him in my own.

"I like your making apologies," said Julia, "when you know how very much I admire the lovely creature Meyler. *Apropos*," continued Julia, "my two banknotes were in my bosom all the while, and I want, very much, to apologise to that dear little blooming, arch-looking man, for all the trouble I have given him."

I could not but fancy Julia was not so much my friend as she ought to have been, considering how anxious I had always shown myself for her welfare, in thus encouraging Meyler; and I went home more than usually interested about Lord Worcester; because Julia tried to make me neglect him.

In this humour, I sent off a few lines to Mr. Meyler, begging to be excused from my promise of meeting him at Mrs. Johnstone's. All this is infinitely amiable of me, I reflected, with much self-complacency, for I was very dull by myself, and Meyler, as to externals, was much to my taste.

Julia informed me, in the evening, that Meyler had sat with

her, for more than two hours, hoping to see me, and had gone away much disappointed.

The next day, I received a letter from him, begging permission to call on me; and, as I sent no answer, he took the liberty of coming to my house without permission, and I had some difficulty, and so had my servant, in getting him out of it, and which was not till he had made every possible effort to see me, for he went upstairs, and tried to open the door of my sitting-room, which I had locked.

The moment he was very fairly out of my house, I addressed the following note to him.

Miss Wilson presents her compliments to Mr. Meyler, is under the necessity of informing him that she requires a little more respect than he seems disposed to show towards her. Mr. Meyler might have taken it for granted that, if she had been at home this morning, and disposed to receive his visits, she should not have been denied to him.

Camden Town.

On Saturday, I could not well turn Meyler out of a box in which Julia had a share, without her consent, and I was teased and talked into allowing him to set us down; but nothing could induce me to admit him into my house, nor to remain alone with him an instant, anywhere.

I had promised to send Worcester a journal of everything I did; and it really is so little in my nature, that it is scarcely in my power, to be artful; and so, as I would not walk about Camden Town, to enjoy a *tête-à-tête* by moonlight, Julia was pressed into the service, and we all three wandered about the fields, and Meyler sighed, and talked downright sentimentally about leading a chaste life for my sake, and sending away all his women! At this, of course, we both laughed; but Meyler continued in the same humour for two months longer. I never received a single visit from him at my own house, and insisted, over and over again, that he should not be admitted into my opera box; but Meyler had so many little winning ways, really they were over-

powering to a poor weak woman! He would tap at the door of my box, and Julia would open it, and assure him that I should quarrel with them both if she admitted him: and Meyler, instead of looking cross, would sigh! and point to a rose in his bosom, and desire Julia to tell me that it was the rose I gave him a week before, and he had preserved it with the greatest care. Then he would go downstairs, and then his legs were so beautiful, and his skin so clear and transparent, and Meyler was sentimental for the first time in his life!

Really all these things, and thirty thousand a year besides, were enough to melt a heart of stone: and, as we were going out of the opera, we were sure to see Meyler's bright smile, as he stood watching for us. Then, if there was the least difficulty about coaches, etc., he would come up and say mildly that his carriage was at the door, and, if we would use it, he would not enter it, but go home in a friend's. In short, Meyler was so very humble, persevering, and indefatigable, that he contrived to see and converse with me every day of my life, in spite of all I could do to prevent him, although I never once admitted him to my house, or to a *tête-à-tête*, and I wrote Worcester a full and most exact account of all my proceedings. I even went so far as to tell him, I really was afraid Meyler's attentions might create a very strong fancy, notwithstanding I certainly had not esteem for him. To prevent the possibility of this, I proposed retiring into some quiet village in Devonshire.

This my readers, I mean my young and handsome readers, will admit was a sort of thing easier said than done. London was so very gay! Meyler so very attentive! *Tout le monde* seemed so very much to admire my person, and delight in my conversation! and I was about to leave all this for a dull village, where I was to pass one of the most brilliant years of my life in perfect solitude.

"I will make any settlement on you you may please to ask of me," said Meyler, "if you will but leave Worcester, and live with me."

"You have told me this at least fifty times already," I replied,

"and you really may spare yourself any further useless trouble. I must follow the dictates of my heart, whatever may become of me. There will be a consolation in a clear conscience, and, in leaving Worcester, I should feel that I deserved the worst that could happen to me, and both your lives might be lost in a duel; or, if Worcester was killed abroad, having first cursed me for my conduct, I should never get over it: else, you know I am full half in love with you, and Worcester knows well I was never, one bit, in love with him."

"Then, if you do love me," said Meyler, "I will hold myself disengaged, and wait for my chance of you, during the whole of that year you have promised to wait for Worcester's return."

I laughed at Meyler's promises, assuring him I had not the least faith in them.

Worcester was eternally writing to me, and nothing could be more romantically tender than his letters. No power on earth could tempt him, or should ever induce him, while he breathed, to even bestow a single kiss on any woman's lips but mine, etc. Then followed very excellent descriptions of battles, with a long account of Parker for Fanny.

These very kind letters at length determined me to leave London.

The last evening I passed in town was truly a dull one, to me. No doubt, thought I, this gay, young, volatile creature, surrounded as he is by temptation, will forget me in less than a month! I am unprovided for, and am leaving every friend on earth, to wander about for a lone lodging, in a dismal village. It cannot be helped! Worcester's mind must be set at rest; because there was nothing he was not ready to do for me.

"Where is there a village?" said I to Luttrell, who informed me that there was a village called Charmouth, within thirty miles of Exeter, which, as he once passed through it, had struck him as particularly picturesque.

"That will do," said I, sick of the dry, dull subject; and I took a place for myself and my *femme de chambre* in the Exeter mail without further delay.

Meyler was half cooled, as soon as I was quite determined to leave London; but still he was very melancholy.

Might he write to me? he inquired.

"Yes," said I, "but your letters will be shown to Worcester, mind; so you must confine yourself to mere friendship. If, however, circumstances force me to leave His Lordship, and you are good enough to remember me with kindness, I will gladly come to you.

"In a year, then," said Meyler, "if Worcester does not return?"

"All that must depend on circumstances," I replied.

Meyler shed one tear at parting—*c'était beaucoup pour lui*, and he gave me a gold toothpick-case, with some of his hair in it; so, having taken leave of Fanny and Julia, fancy me, and my maid, in the Exeter mail, on our road to Charmouth; and, in about one fortnight after my arrival in this village, my reader may imagine me sitting at a little rural thatched window, in that beautiful country, addressing the following long letter to my sister Fanny.

Charmouth, Devonshire.

My Dearest Sister,

I really am afraid you will excuse me of want of affection towards you, in having suffered a whole fortnight to elapse, without acquainting you of my arrival in this part of the world. The fact is, my constitution is really good for nothing, and I have only just recovered the fatigues of two successive nights passed in the mail-coach. I could have scribbled a few lines, it is true; but then I thought it would be so cockney-like, to put you to the expense of heavy postage, merely to state our safe arrival; and I waited till I could give you some little account of myself.

To begin, then, we got here at about six in the evening, without anything in the least romantic having occurred to us; for we were neither ravished, upset, nor thrown into a pond just as a lovely youth happened to be passing by.

One of these incidents ought really to have occurred; mais enfin que voulez-vous? *It was a beautiful May evening, when the*

mail-coach set us down at a little country-looking sort of pot-house, in this village. I was wretchedly oppressed by melancholy and fatigue! I inquired for beds, and was informed, by very good luck, that my landlady's only bedroom, containing two small, neat, white beds, was at our disposal. The staircase was a ladder, or rather a ladder was the staircase. We will not be particular. I was soon in bed, and my maid contrived to procure me a cup of tea, which is all I remember happening to me till about eight the next morning, when the broad sun, shining in my face, for want of window-curtains, induced me to rise. As for my maid, she was already dressed, and busy with my trunks, searching out my clean linen. I am sorry, really, for the most noble the Marquis of Worcester! but the fact is, my very first thoughts on awaking, and my most sincere regrets, were for the miles which now separated me from poor little beautiful Meyler. In short, having done everything right towards Worcester, I loved him much less for that very reason. My maid, as you know, is really superior to the generality of femmes de chambre, *and, as I have had reason to believe, is really attached to me: still, I fancy, she must have left somebody yet dearer to her in London, from her extreme melancholy. However, my own spirits were this morning so deeply oppressed, that I liked her the better for being of my humour.*

As soon as I was dressed, my good-natured landlady begged I would come down to breakfast while it was hot. She gave us most excellent Devonshire cream, and hot Devonshire cakes. In short, everything was so clean and delicious, in its way, that it was difficult not to be hungry.

After our breakfast, we inquired for a guide, to show us some of the beauties of that part of the country.

"My little boy will take you over to Lyme Regis. He is particularly cute, and can tell you more than I can," said the good landlady.

"What distance is Lyme Regis from this village?" I inquired.

"Oh laws! only about two miles, and the most beautifullest walk in the world."

Behold us, then, on our road to Lyme Regis, with a little cute

Devonshire lad for our guide. I cannot describe the scenery, like Mrs. Radcliffe; I wish I could; but, alas! I have not an idea of the kind, and yet I can feel and enjoy it. Devonshire, you know is a very hilly country, and the air is almost as pure as that in Italy. After following our guide for about a quarter of a mile along a close, narrow lane, entirely shaded from the sun, we turned a sudden angle, when such a magnificent view of the ocean presented itself, as absolutely fixed us to the spot for nearly ten minutes. I wish I could describe it, for nothing, in the shape of scenery, ever made such an impression on me, as that we enjoyed in our walk from the village of Charmouth to the pretty little watering place called Lyme Regis. It was about twelve o'clock when we arrived there.

Lyme Regis is a sort of Brighton in miniature, all bustle and confusion, assembly-rooms, donkey-riding, raffling, etc., etc. It was sixpence per night to attend the assemblies, and much cheaper if paid by the season. We went to a little inn and dined. From the window, I was much amused to see the number of smart old maids that were tripping down the streets, in turbans or artificial flowers twined around their wigs, on the light fantastic toe, to the sixpenny assembly-rooms, at five in the evening! ! They were very pleasantly situated, near the sea, and as we walked past their windows, we saw them all drinking tea and playing at cards. There were, amongst them, persons of the highest rank; but the society was chiefly composed of people of very small independent fortunes, who, for economy, had settled at Lyme Regis; or of such as required sea-bathing; natives either of Exeter or any neighbouring town. There were plenty of furnished lodgings to be let at Lyme Regis; but I determined, if possible, to establish myself at Charmouth, that place being so much more to my taste.

"It will be impossible, madam," said the landlady where we dined, "since Charmouth is a very genteel village, inhabited by persons of small fortunes, who would not condescend to let lodgings, or take in boarders. There are not, perhaps, three dozen houses, in the whole village, and certainly not one lodging-house. All are independent and proud, except the owners of a few huts, round

about that neighbourhood, to whom the gentry of Charmouth are very kind and charitable."

"Well then, I must return, much against my will, to establish myself here," said I. This idea increased my melancholy! for I hate, and always did hate, anything like London in miniature! give me town or country engrand! *Solitude, or the best society; but I abhor little sixpenny assembly-places.*

At eight o'clock in the evening, we arrived at our humble inn at Charmouth, in a donkey-cart, and immediately retired to rest. At six the next morning since the broad daylight would not suffer me to sleep, I determined to walk all about the village, in search of lodgings, before I could be induced to give up the hopes of securing a residence there. We found no difficulty in procuring the same excellent breakfast, which was served up, with perfect neatness, by half-past six, and at a little after seven the gay and fashionable Harriette Wilson was to be seen strolling about the little village of Charmouth, as though it had been her native place, and she had never heard tell of the pomps and vanities of this very wicked world, or the sinful lusts of the flesh, etc.

We carefully examined every house we passed, for a bill indicative of lodgings to let: but in vain. They all appeared to be inhabited by some respectable individual, neither rich nor poor. We had walked twice through the village, and round about it, and were bending our steps towards our little pot-house, in mute despair, when my attention was arrested by the striking loveliness of a young lady who was watering some flowers at one of the windows of a house I had before admired for its peculiar neatness. She smiled so very graciously that I was encouraged in my wish to address her. The moment she saw me make towards the little street door, she ran and opened it herself. After many apologies, I entreated to be informed if I was likely to succeed in obtaining board and lodging with any private family at Charmouth. The young lady entreated me to walk into the parlour and sit down. We chatted together for about a quarter of an hour, like people who had taken a liking to each other, and then she left me to speak to her mother on the subject of procuring me a comfortable residence. In a short time

she returned, and presented me to two very respectable-looking women, in deep mourning, as her mother and aunt. After a little more conversation, Mrs. Edmond, which was the name of the young lady's mother, spoke to me, to this effect: "I am the widow of an officer in the navy, whose death, when abroad, I learned ten years ago from a brother-officer, who had been present, and came here to convey his last requests to his family; since that moment, having for ever renounced the world, I live only in my child, and have nothing to do, on earth, but to attend to and promote her happiness. She feels greatly disposed to benefit by your pleasant society, and has made it her anxious request that I will offer you an asylum in my house; therefore, if you like to inhabit a snug room, which faces the country, it is at your service, and you may keep it entirely for your own use. I have also a servant's room for your maid, and, if you can accustom yourself to our family dinner, the thing is arranged at once."

I could scarcely conceal my surprise, at finding such good, innocent, confiding people, ready thus to take a stranger in without making a single inquiry. However, as I determined to act with the strictest propriety, and conform to the established rules of the family, to be regular at church, too, for the sake of example, I conceived that it was certainly not incumbent on me to turn king's evidence against myself, as to my former irregularities, or, as my friend Miss Higgins would say, little peccadilloes. I pressed them to name terms, for me and my maid, at once, and the price they asked for being troubled with us both was so ridiculously moderate, that I insisted on doubling it, and refused to hear another word on the subject. These good people would not even allow me to return to the little inn, but dispatched a man, with my femme de chambre, *to pay my bill and bring my trunks to me.*

Everything, which the warmest affection or the oldest friendship could have dictated, was put in practice for our comfort and accommodation. I had a nice bedroom, adjoining the snug little sitting-room, where I am now writing, and Mrs. Edmond, who has long studied the qualities of medicine, in order to render herself useful to the poor people about the village, insisted on doctoring me,

declaring that I was feverish. One of the ladies rubbed my feet, another administered white wine-whey, and another—but I have swelled my letter to such an enormous length, that I must defer saying any more, about these good people, till my next. I am very anxious to hear from you, and I confess I should like to know if Meyler has entirely forgotten me.

What vain creatures we are! I expected to have received at least half a dozen letters from that young gentleman ere this. Alas! not a single line! Do, pray, dear Fanny, let me soon be consoled, in this extreme case, by an account of his having hanged or shot himself! I must inclose this to the Marquis of Hertford, not to ruin you. Pray write soon, to a poor melancholy recluse, and believe me ever,

Your most affectionate sister,

H.W.

P.S. How do Amy and her schoolmaster of Athens go on?

CHAPTER XIX

Two days after I had dispatched this letter, the little post-woman (for we had no postman), a good old soul, who trotted *à l'Esterhazy*, down the hill, with a lanthorn, the mailbag coming into Charmouth at ten o'clock at night—Eliza Edmond and I had watched this poor creature, every night, during almost a fortnight, from my little window, as the light of her lamp appeared for an instant, and was lost again, while she stopped to deliver her letters. At last she stopped at our door, and presented two heavy packages for Mrs. Wilson.

The kind, warm-hearted Miss Edmond came flying upstairs, and was breathless when she delivered them.

"One of these is a foreign letter, and, no doubt, from your husband," said Eliza, kissing my cheek, while her eyes sparkled with such unaffected benevolent joy as made her beauty appear more than human.

I hastily examined the address of the first which was presented to me: it was from Lord Worcester, and the real anxiety I felt to learn his safety overcoming all curiosity about Meyler, I broke the seal of this, while the other, unexamined, had fallen to the ground.

"It is from your husband, then?" asked Eliza, and, having answered her in the affirmative, she had the delicacy to glide out of the room, like a spirit, before I was aware of it.

Worcester had already been in one action. He had prayed to me, as to his tutelar saint, kissed my chain, which he wore about his neck, and his party had been successful. He wrote in high spirits, and gave me what, by excellent judges of those matters, was afterwards considered one of the most accurate

descriptions of a battle ever written by any officer. The letter ended, like all the rest of his letters, with vows of eternal love and fidelity; and he assured me that he had already learned to speak Spanish.

What a clever man this might have been, had he but the habit of reflection, methought: for Lord Worcester's memory often astonished me; and yet the man must, after all, be little better than an idiot, if he cannot reflect, or study, or understand the secret workings of the human mind. Such men esteem no act but that of hand:

> The still and mental parts,
> That do contrive how many hands shall strike,
> When fitness calls them on; and know, by measure
> Of their observant toil, the enemies' weight—
> Why this hath not a finger's dignity;
> They call this bed-work, moppery, closet-work;
> So that the ram, that batters down the wall,
> For the great swing, and rudeness of his poise,
> They place before the hand that made the engine,
> Or those that, with the fineness of their souls,
> By reason, guide his execution.

I have been led into making this quotation *malgré moi;* it is so very striking, clear, and beautifully expressive.

Somebody or other has, I think, asserted that the comedy of Troilus and Cressida is not a genuine work of Shakespeare; but I cannot but agree with a very great man, Doctor Johnson, that it is easier to imagine Shakespeare might, sometimes, fall below his highest flights, than that anybody else should be found equal to his lowest.

Having finished reading Lord Worcester's letter, I hastened to examine the second epistle, which had fallen to the ground. It was, as I suspected, or rather as I hoped, from Meyler. He had at first, he said, determined to forget me, since there was so very little chance of our ever meeting again. However that, as he was pleased to add, was out of the question. He was in fact unwell, and required Devonshire air. I must not be surprised,

therefore, to see him in my neighbourhood. He had only once called on Julia, since I left town; because, seeing my friends only added to his melancholy, now I was gone. There was nothing like Worcester's sort of rapture in his letter, yet something melancholy and interesting about his style of writing, which appeared perfectly unaffected.

Meyler was anything rather than romantic: his manner and voice were particularly pleasing at all times; but the former had, generally, something of melancholy, till he had drank a few bottles of claret, though not at all noisy or ungentlemanlike, he appeared all animation and happiness.

I was a good deal affected by his letter, and the idea that I had no chance of seeing him again; nevertheless I immediately answered his letter as follows.

Charmouth.

My Dear Mr. Meyler,

I must candidly confess that I am glad that you have not forgotten me; and I wish you happy, with all my heart and soul; but, believe me, I cannot prove myself more desirous of being liked and esteemed by you, than I have done and shall continue to do. I have often been surprised at the imbecility of the silly, weak, mistaken females who fancy they can make themselves beloved, by breaking the solemn vows they have made to God and their husbands, and forsaking, for ever, a whole family of helpless children: as if a man could esteem, trust, love, or honour one who proves herself a heartless hypocrite and an unnatural mother! One who, for the indulgence of mere animal-passion, for of real affection she must be incapable, can forsake her children, and forget the laws of God and man. I have never been married, it is true. My mother's marriage was unhappy, and besides being somewhat disgusted with what I saw of it, I cannot, for the life of me, divest myself of the idea that, if all were alike honourable and true, as I wish to be, it would be unnecessary to bind men and women together by law, since two persons who may have chosen each other from affection, possessing heart and honour, could not part; and, where there is neither the one nor the other, even marriage does not bind. My

idea may be wicked, or erroneous: indeed I think it is so, with regard to mothers; but at least I hope I am incapable of acting, towards anyone, with a want of honour, or of such tenderness of heart towards those who deserve it from me, without which feeling a woman is, in my opinion, unsexed. As I keep my faith to Worcester, so hereafter will you be inclined to trust me, if any unexpected circumstance should oblige me to separate from him. In the meantime, I must throw myself on your honour and kindness. As to your idea of intruding your society on me in Devonshire, I assure you that, on the very day of your arrival, I shall hold myself in readiness to leave these very hospitable, new friends, who have been so very kind to me; but you are, of course, only joking! How, in fact, can I be so ridiculous as to fancy, for an instant, the rich, handsome, gay Meyler, would so far astonish the natives of this little village as to come and establish himself among us? How you would laugh to see me, in my quiet straw-bonnet, trotting down the hill to church, and lending my arm to the curate's father, aged ninety-five! After church, I appear in the character of my Lady Bountiful! paying visits to the sick, followed by my maid, bearing my good host's medicine, with my own wine and broth. Charity is stimulated where, here the number of poor is so limited that, by each of us contributing our mite, we may hope to meet only smiling, happy faces in our walks.

Last week I found a poor woman, and six fine, beautiful children, without a roof to her house: for a trifle, I made it a comparative paradise, and now Miss Edmond and her mother are employed in making up the stuff-frocks I purchased for the children. But enough of Harriette Wilson as Lady Bountiful.

I suppose you will soon get into parliament, à présent que vous avez vingt et un ans bien sommès. *Do you see much of your favourite the Duchess of Beaufort now? Pray tell me all the news you can scrape together. Of course, the Beauforts have received news from Lord Worcester long ago? My last letter from His Lordship, which I received with yours, had been delayed by being directed to London. My old beau, Wellington, is going on famously, thanks to the fineness of his nerves, and his want of*

feeling, and his excellent luck. I do not mean to say he has not a good notion of commanding an army; for, though I do not understand things, I am willing to take it for granted that this is the case; and yet, I am told, but I will not venture to say by whom, that he is miserably ignorant of the country, and ought, really, to hire a master for geography, instead of sitting still, and looking so stupid, after dinner. It is really quite disgusting, when one has been hearing him so cried up, to see him such a savage! Nevertheless, tel qu'il est, *he has made, I understand, a desperate conquest of Lady Caroline Lamb; but then Her Ladyship was never very particular, you know.*

I will now take my leave, with sincerest wishes for your welfare and happiness; therefore, whether we meet again or not,

God bless you.

H.W.

Though I remained a year at Charmouth, I really can remember no one incident that occurred to me, during the whole of my *séjour* there, worthy the attention of my readers. Mrs. Edmond was invariably obliging, gentle and melancholy; her sister, my Aunt Martha, as Eliza Edmond used to call her, was a very merry, comical old maid. Eliza was, without any one exception but that of my beloved mother, the most truly virtuous being, according to my acceptation of the word virtuous, which does not mean chastity only, I ever met with in my whole life. Nay, my dear mother herself cannot have been purer, in her thoughts, hopes, and wishes, than was the beautiful Eliza Edmond; but then Eliza possessed a less enlarged mind, and was more a bigot, and had less quickness and natural strong sense, than that dear parent. Eliza lived and breathed but to serve, oblige, and benefit others, and yet she was afraid of God our Father, who is in heaven. This I could never understand.

My mother would have lived for others whether it pleased God or not; because her heart would have it so; but when she felt her death approaching, instead of praying, or sending for a priest, she merely said, "I wanted rest, and God is about to reward me with it: yet I fain would have remained with my

children, had it so pleased him; for I asked not to be happy, before they were."

Eliza was beautiful; but my mother's beauty was that of spirit and mind alone. It was not earthly; for I have seen nothing on earth like it: so pale, so still, and so expressive. In the whole course of my life, I never saw my mother anxious, even one instant, unless for others; and yet I have nursed her in the bitter pangs of child bearing, and have often seen her tortured with bodily pain; yet, God's will be done, was all she said or thought as to herself, while, in regard to serving others, she was the most sanguine, eager and romantic that could be possibly imagined.

Eliza was too religious, too devoted to the observance of every form of the christian faith, to have cast an eye of love on anything but a parson; and her heart would therefore have been safe, but that, unluckily, a certain black-eyed, most libidinous divine, having been thrown into her society, just before I became acquainted with her, his hypocrisy had proved more than a match for poor Eliza's simplicity; and she had loved him, from the belief that he was most pure and holy. My readers may conceive what her feelings must have been, when this first object of her warmest, devoted love, finally declared to her that their marriage must be kept secret, since his friends would never receive her as their daughter.

From that hour, Eliza had never seen her lover, and no power on earth could have induced her to consent to a single interview.

"You are, then, very proud, Eliza," said I to her, after her mother had related this story to me in her presence.

"Do you call my love of God pride?" asked Eliza. "If ever I had married, my husband, after my God, would have been nearest my heart. Could I respect the husband who would deceive his parents? or would you have had me force myself into a family which despised me?"

I never saw Eliza so agitated, and, observing the crimson blush on her cheek, I said, "You are very proud, Eliza, after all, that is the truth."

Eliza's quivering lip was now pale as death, as she raised her eyes to heaven, and, in the next instant, she rushed out of the room.

Eliza's mother placed her hand gently on my shoulder, seeing that I was about to follow her daughter.

"Eliza is gone to pray," said Mrs. Edmond, mildly. "You have frightened her; but, it was not, I am sure, intentionally. You know not how very delicate is her conscience; how pure, yet how ardent are her feelings! Pray go to her in about a quarter of an hour. I would not have her dwell longer on what you have said; for Eliza is consumptive. She will be taken from me soon enough, by God's will; we must not cause her unnecessary agitation."

Mrs. Edmond, as she wiped away the tear which gave brilliancy to her eye, seemed as if she would have spoken severely to me, had severity been in her nature! I held out my hand, timidly, towards her, and she immediately pressed it most cordially, as she repeated, smiling through her tears, "Eliza loves you so dearly, that I am sure, if you have wounded or frightened her, you can and you will console her."

I pressed this tender mother's hand to my lips, and hastened to join her no less tender daughter. I found her upon her knees, and her eyes were bathed in tears.

"Eliza," said I, "why do you weep? Surely, since God is our Father, and you love Him, and pass every hour of your life in trying to please Him, you, of all people on earth, need not fear your Father."

"But I am proud, very proud," said the poor, dear girl, sobbing, and throwing her arms round my neck, "and the indignation I expressed, and which I then believed to have been virtuous, you have taught me to believe was all pride; and that God, whom I adore, that God, in whose presence I shall soon stand, loves only the humble and the meek. Leave me," continued Eliza in much agitation, "pray let me benefit by your good, your excellent understanding. I want to be reconciled to my God. Indeed you shall, if it so pleases Him, see me as calm

and happy as ever, when we meet at supper. Till then, God bless you," and she imprinted a most fervent and most affectionate kiss on my cheek.

"God will not, I am sure, judge you so severely as you judge yourself, poor Eliza," I replied, and then left her.

Eliza, generally speaking, was more cheerful than persons usually are when they are dying; and nobody expected that poor Eliza would live beyond five and twenty.

We were often invited to little family tea-parties, where we passed our time comfortably enough, though most gay London ladies would have been bored to death; but I thank Nature for bestowing on me a contented disposition.

Meyler wrote to me constantly: sometimes he was melancholy; then he determined to join me, whether I would or not; he next declared that I was cold and selfish, and that he would forget me: at last, he almost teased me out of a promise, or rather a half-promise that if, at the end of the year, there were new obstacles thrown in the way of my joining Worcester, or His Lordship's returning to me, I would put myself at once under Meyler's protection.

In the meantime Lord Worcester corresponded with me as regular and lovingly as I could possibly desire, and so did Fanny. In answer to one of my letters to her, written nearly three months after my arrival in Devonshire, I received the following:

My Dear Harriette,

Many thanks for your last kind letter, in which you inclose my Lord Worcester's, containing so much news of Colonel Parker. I was, indeed, in want of consolation; for I am very melancholy, and my cough is still rather troublesome, although not bad enough to have prevented my attendance at the opera, which closed but last night for the season.

All the gay world are constantly asking me about you. As to Mr. Meyler, we have seen but little of him. Last night, however, we observed him in the pit; and so did Amy, who was of our party: she immediately sent somebody down to request him to join us, and

her messenger returned, bringing Meyler with him. He looks very well, and, as usual, particularly interesting. He asked Julia and me at least a thousand questions about you. Amy, to change the disagreeable subject, invited him to sup with her; but he begged to be excused, provokingly adding that her house would make him melancholy, by reminding him of you. Amy could scarcely conceal her ill humour at this answer. Julia asked him if he really meant to say he had not forgotten you, all this time? and he seriously declared that he had never loved you better, nor any being else half so well: and then the poor little man sighed quite naturally, as though he could not help it; but, though I do not mean to hurt your vanity, I fancy there was something of ill health in that sigh of his. However, perhaps this is a mere fancy of mine, for Mr. Meyler himself, who ought to be the best judge, professes to be in remarkably good health, and he is known to ride very hard in Leicestershire. But there is something so remarkably transparent about Meyler's skin, it is, in fact, a churchyard-skin, like my own, I think, I hope I am mistaken, too: for it would be hard to die, in the bloom of youth and beauty, beloved by everybody, and with thirty thousand a year.

My children, thank heaven, are all well, although I really feared my dear Louisa would have died last week, owing to my extreme folly in having suffered myself to be persuaded into administering one of Inglish's Scott's pills to the poor baby, out of sister Paragon's box. All Pandora's box of evils could scarcely have done more mischief. The child was absolutely convulsed with pain, while provoking sister Paragon looked on, calmly declaring that it was the first duty of an aperient to gripe the patient as much as possible.

Pray write a very long letter soon, and believe me, at all times, your most affectionate sister,

FANNY PARKER.

His Grace of Beaufort had passed his word as to the regular, quarterly, payment of an allowance, which Worcester stipulated should be paid me if he left England; yet four months had now elapsed, without my having been able to obtain a single shilling from the Duke, or even an answer to my letters, in which I

assured him that all my ready money was gone, and that I was entirely destitute of the means of existence.

The Duke, perhaps, hoped to starve me into putting up with the first man I could find; at all events, it was clear I might have starved, or begged, or thrown myself into the streets, before he would have offered me the least assistance while he could possibly have avoided it; and, in this amiable conduct, I take it for granted he was upheld and encouraged by his most interesting Duchess.

I was now in debt, a whole quarter, for board and lodging. Never having once doubted the Duke's word of honour, conveyed to me by his man of business, in the presence of his son; and, being so far from London, I sat down to consider who I could possibly consult, in that part of the world, as to what was to become of me.

The only person in my neighbourhood whose face I had ever seen before, was an old, cracked sort of a general, his name I have forgotten. I never had but a mere bowing acquaintance with him, from the circumstance of his being my next door neighbour in London, where he bore the character of a terrible deceiver of maids and maidservants! In short, I do not believe there was a single girl of that description, within two miles of us, with whom he had not scraped a kind of acquaintance.

I remember a worthy clergyman, who was also my near neighbour, took this gay Lothario's meddling with his maid very much amiss, and consequently addressed to him the following note, which he afterwards insisted on my reading, one day when I met him in the Regent's Park, and had been, myself, reproaching him with his evil ways

SIR,

I presume that you cannot wish to interfere with the domestic comforts of your neighbours. I have to request, therefore, that you never again, to the latest hour of your life, carry your libertinism to such an extent as to meddle with my maidservant.

I remain, sir,

Your most obedient servant.

The old general's answer was expressed in these words.

SIR,

Respect for your cloth will prevent my having the pleasure of blowing out your brains for your impertinence.

In answer to your letter, then, I have to inform you that I neither want your manservant, your maidservant, your ox, your ass, nor anything that is yours, and remain,

Your most obedient servant.

"What do you think of this, Samuel?" said the worthy divine, to his tall unlicked cub of a son, in cotton stockings and thick shoes, handing him the above epistle, after he had perused it three times over in silent astonishment.

"Think of it!" said the son, as soon as he had looked it over, "think of it, sir!"

"Aye! What may be your serious thoughts of it?" continued the parson.

"Why, sir . . . Why, sir (swelling with rage), why—sir—d—— his impudence!"

"For shame, Samuel, don't swear."

"Swear, sir! Don't tell me! this ought to make a parson swear."

Samuel snatched up his hat, and ran out of the house.

In about two hours afterwards, as the old, impudent, Irish, cracked general was finishing his dinner, at his own lodgings, in strutted Mr. Samuel, foaming with rage.

"Your most obedient," said the general.

"Sir," answered Samuel, "I am no parson, therefore no ceremony with me, if you please. I want you to meet me to-morrow morning, in Hyde Park, at six; and, do you hear? bring your second with you; there's my card."

"Just as you please, Mr., Mr.," and then the comical general read the card aloud, "Mr. Samuel Michael—just exactly as you please. Won't you take a glass of wine?" continued the general, looking at him for an instant, as he filled his own glass.

"No, sir," said Samuel Michael fiercely, "all I require of you, sir, is, punctuality, to-morrow morning."

"Just as you please," reiterated the general; and Samuel took his leave.

The next morning, the general ordered his old servant to bring him his coffee at five o'clock, and, as he was drinking it, with his papers before him, Samuel Michael again made his appearance.

"You will be surprised to see me here, general?" said Samuel, in a mild and tremulous tone—the general bowed—"but," continued Samuel, "but—it really is not worth while, I mean, I think it is not necessary to fight. In short, sir, if you require an apology, I am ready to write one down, if, general, you——" and he paused, half breathless with fear.

"Just as you please, Mr. Samuel Michael; just exactly as you please," said the general again, as he turned over a parcel of receipts.

"I may now, then," said Samuel, "conclude this unpleasant business is amicably settled?"

"Just exactly as you please, sir," answered the general once more, as he made some memorandums on the back of his receipt book.

So much for the old general! and more than he is worth.

When I saw him first, at Charmouth, I cut him dead; but being now really anxious to consult someone who knew a little about me, I took the liberty of nodding to him the next time I met him.

"Oh, oh, my fair neighbour! I really feared I had been so unfortunate as to have offended you. How do you do, pray?"

We then entered into conversation, and as I discovered that he, like half the rest of the world, had heard all about Worcester and me, I consulted him as to what was to be done.

"Don't you know Fisher, the lady-killer of these parts?" he inquired.

"Heaven forbid!" said I.

"Why so?" asked the General. "He is a most particularly

sharp fellow, and being a lawyer, who knows who you are, and all about you, he is the very man to consult."

"But then, I am so afraid of the persons with whom I am living," said I.

"Be assured," answered the General, "that Fisher will be secret as to your business. I will tell him you mean to apply to him, and you may depend upon his honour. I am sure he will put you up to a plan of making that shabby Duke of Beaufort treat you better."

"But why is he called a lady-killer?"

"He is the beauty of Devonshire. Such black eyes! and six foot high!" answered the General.

"The very things I hate in a man, so I am safe, and may consult your Mr. Fisher, and yet hope to die a natural death after all."

I took my leave of this comical old man, and on the very same evening addressed the following note to the gay Mr. Fisher, of Lyme Regis.

SIR,

A friend of yours has, I trust, acquainted you with my motive for wishing to see you. As the family with which I am staying is unacquainted with my real situation, I should wish to consult you without their knowledge, if you will be kind enough to say how that can be managed. If you will tell me the proper hour, in the morning, I will go to Lyme Regis.

I remain, Sir,
Your most obedient humble servant,
H. WILSON.

"What sort of a man is Mr. Fisher, the attorney, of Lyme Regis?" said I to Eliza, after I had carried my letter to the post office.

"Oh, he is a very gay man indeed; a very shocking man, they say; indeed, I have heard that he makes love to several women at the same time, although he is a married man; but it would be uncharitable of us to suppose anything so wicked as that."

I could not help laughing at poor Eliza, who must have been meant for the golden age.

The next evening, the little old post-woman, for whom Eliza and I had been watching till we were nearly worn out, condescended to bend her steps, little lanthorn and all, towards our door. Down flew Eliza and, this time, presented me with three letters; the postmark on one of them was Lyme Regis; so, guessing this to be from Eliza's terrible man, Mr. Fisher, I put it into my reticule unopened. The other two were from Meyler and Worcester. I beg His Lordship's pardon, for putting him last; it was not, certainly, done with any intention to offend, but quite naturally. Meyler, having tried every other argument to induce me to leave Charmouth and Lord Worcester, now ventured on a threat!

You have a husband, with whom you are, it seems, quite satisfied; or rather a lover, for whom, too, you cheerfully resign me, and the income I have offered you, to assist those methodistical Edmonds, in feeding their pigs and chickens! *Grand bien vous fasse!* I, too, shall take unto myself a wife, as the Quaker says, and verily the spirit has moved me towards a certain fair one, and in sundry places.

The letter finished with some Melton news, and an account of his having hurt his right arm, which would prevent his playing at tennis for the rest of his life. He would rather have lost half his estate, upon his honour. He was, at last, chosen for Winchester, after a severe contested election, which had cost him twenty thousand pounds; but then it was well worth that sum to be independent. Not that he should be very active either way. In fact, Lord Bath had been kind enough to point out to him the best seat in the lower house for taking a nap. Still he should be miserable, if under the necessity of voting against his own idea of what was fitting and best. The letter went on in these words:

I had no idea, my dearest Harriette, for you are still very dear to me, although you do use me so ill, I had not the smallest idea that it was necessary to kiss so many dirty ugly women, and drink

so much ale, rum and milk, grog, raisin and elder wine, with porter and cyder, all in one day, otherwise I don't think I would have gone into Parliament; for I have been sick for a fortnight; and then, in this wretched state of stomach, one must get up, and make a speech to one's constituents, full of lies about future protection, friendship, and God knows what. However, I was really getting on famously, as I flattered myself, and should have finished with éclat, *had not my eyes encountered that fool Lord Apsley, holding his sides in a roar of laughter, and he was joined by that prince of blockheads, Harry Mildmay, who is also member for Winchester.*

I stopped short, of course, finding it impossible to go on. I was very drunk, to be sure; but still, these fellows had no right to turn against me in such a mob. As to that ape, Mildmay, I am half determined to lead a virtuous life on my Hampshire estate, studying the happiness of my Winchester constituents, on purpose to mortify him and cut him out there.

The letter ended with many tender professions and entreaties that I would go to him.

Worcester's letter, of three sheets, crossed and recrossed, only contained matter for four pages, leaving out the dearest darlings! angel-wives! loveliest, sweetest, adorable, own own, everlastingly to be worshipped, etc.

We are, says Worcester's letter, only my readers must hold in mind that I am leaving out His Lordship's ohs and ahs! *we are within a stone's throw of the enemy. God only knows whether I shall be permitted to see you again or not. Your chain is round my neck, and as for your picture, I could not press my lips near enough to your sweet delicious eyes, without taking off the glass; and now, alas! I have kissed the left eye out, altogether, with your under lip. I am dreadfully melancholy! but, being so close to the enemy, pray don't tell anybody. If ever your heart beats against my own, and I leave you again, may I——*

But oaths are all nonsense, particularly those of noble lords, marquesses, and dukes; besides, if I were to go on with the most noble the Marquis of Worcester's letter, I might tumble upon

something indecent. Who knows; we are but mortal! even marquesses and dukes are but mortal! and the weather is so hot in Spain and Portugal!

Poor Worcester! or as your late frail wife used to call you, poor Worcey! thou hast turned out a most cold-blooded profligate, as I am told: but it might not have been thus, if we had married. Our tempers certainly did exactly suit each other; and the love must ever predominate on one side, or there will be an end of all stimulus. Two people calling each other darlings, angels, and ducks, cannot last. I liked you for your own happiness, and, God knows, I was most true, from the hour I placed myself under your protection up to the time we parted. Who dares say nay, I say he lieth. Let him prove it, if he can; for my part, I defy him!

Poor Worcey! You ought to have seen me provided for, and yet I can never quite forget how dearly you loved me, when you gave up all society, endured almost a parent's curse! nay, more, gave up hunting! and offered to support me by driving a mail coach! !

No, young man: never mind what I sometimes write and say. Upon my honour; upon my soul, to give you the expressions out of Lord Ponsonby's last letter, I do not, and never shall quite forget you!

The third letter was, as I supposed, from the provincial Adonis, Mr. Fisher; as follows:

MADAM,

Since secrecy is an object with you, I request you will come to my chambers just after it is dark, on Thursday next, that being the only hour I can command, as free from the interruption of clients; it being my constant habit to refuse admittance to strangers after daylight, although I do not leave my chambers till my papers are all arranged for my clerks, who attend here before eight in the morning.

Obediently yours,

CHARLES FREDERIC FISHER.

What a wretch! said I, to myself, as soon as I had read Mr. Fisher's eloquent epistle. I meet this dirty Devonshire lawyer after dark, indeed! ! I wish Worcester was here. If he had really loved me, as he affects to do, he would have died rather than have left me to be thus insulted by this black, dirty, nasty, six-foot high country attorney! ! Meet him at dark! ! What could one do with such a wretch, either by day or night, or any kind of light? The monster! ! To flatter himself for an instant.

I hastily opened my writing desk, and addressed the following letter to Beau Fisher.

SIR,

Whether I am, or am not, Lord Worcester's wife, be assured that he has too much respect for me, to permit a country attorney to insult me by his invitations to meet him in the dark. You may, of course, do as you please, with regard to the secrecy I mentioned; but it is my, and Lord Worcester's pleasure, that you never presume to insult me again with your odious and very humiliating proposals.

I remain your most obedient,

HARRIETTE.

After I had put this letter in the post office, the next morning, I strolled down to the sea coast, and again met the old General. He came skipping towards me, in great glee.

"You are the very person I wanted to see," said he. "I saw Fisher last night, and he told me he had just answered your note, to assure you that he should feel happy in being able to render you the slightest service."

"Pray don't mention Mr. Fisher to me," answered I, with much dignity.

"Why not?" inquired the General, in surprise.

"Why, he has written me the most insulting letter possible. He desires me to go to his chambers at dark."

"Impossible!" said the General.

"How do you mean, impossible?" I asked.

"Do you really mean to say that Fisher ever hinted anything like a wish to be favoured by you?"

"How do you mean, favoured?"

"May I speak plainly?"

"I beg you will, General," answered I, impatiently.

"Do you really believe Fisher wanted to intrigue with you?"

"You may well be surprised at the wretch's presumption," said I.

"No," interrupted the General, "Fisher would never surprise me by his presumption. I know him too well for that; but, since you permit me to be frank, I will tell you what Fisher said of you the other day."

"Go on."

"You promise not to be offended?"

"I never was offended in the whole course of my life with persons for whom I have no regard, although one sometimes might seem indignant when vulgar people presume to be too impertinent."

The General commenced: "Says Fisher to me, the other day, says Fisher, just as you were passing by, 'What in the name of the devil can Lord Worcester see to admire in that ugly piece of goods? why, I vow to God, I would not have her if she were to fall on her knees to me. She has not a good point about her.' "

"How very funny it will be if I have mistaken his intentions," said I, and I burst into a loud laugh: the idea struck me as so perfectly absurd and comical!

"Rely upon it you have," said the General, "for, without flattery, I will take upon me to say, upon my word and honour, Fisher thinks you anything but desirable, even supposing he had not more on his hands than he can possibly accomplish with any degree of credit to himself."

I had not been so much amused since I left London; and I could not sleep all night, for thinking of my mistake. Worcester had, for the last three years, so surfeited me with love and adoration, that, really, a little indifference was quite refreshing! I was half in love with the good attorney, and went to sleep at last, while wondering to myself what he was like.

At ten in the morning, I opened my eyes, and saw Eliza's pretty smiling face at my bedside, with a letter in her hand.

"A manservant has just brought this letter, from Lyme Regis, and waits to know if you have any answer to send back?" said Eliza.

I was seized with such a violent fit of laughter, after the perusal of Mr. Fisher's letter, that poor Eliza really thought I was mad. It was as follows:

MADAM,

Your misinterpretation of my last note, is, indeed, truly astonishing! I can only assure you, madam, upon my honour, that I have not, and I never had, the slightest wish or intention to meet you, but as a man of business.

Your very obedient, humble servant,
C. F. FISHER.

"What can you be laughing at so violently?" Eliza inquired.

"Oh, you must excuse me," answered I, still laughing.

"Any answer for the servant?"

"Oh, yes. Pray ask him to wait a few minutes," said I, addressing myself to my maid: and I then hastily wrote the following answer to Mr. Fisher's tender effusion:

SIR,

By your letter, I have to apprehend that there was no real cause of alarm! I cannot express my dismay, but must console myself with the hope, and in the belief, that you are all a century behind hand, as to good taste, in this part of the world.

I beg to remain, Sir,
Your most obliged, and very devoted, humble servant,
HARRIETTE.

Having dispatched the above, I wrote thus, in answer to Meyler's long letter:

DEAR MR. MEYLER,

During more than three weeks I had not the honour of receiving a single line from you. At last, you wrote, and franked your letter, probably to shew me that you were in Parliament; Mais.

Dieu me pardonne! je crois que tu me menaces! croyez-moi, mon ami, ni homme, ni femme, ni enfant, n'ont jamais rien eu de moi par ce moyen-là.

If you have found a woman to your taste, in God's name marry her. I foster none but willing slaves, believe me, and love none but such as cannot help themselves, but needs must love me. Your friends the Beauforts are treating me very ill, and I am afraid my good conduct, and the strong desire I felt to act generously towards that family, have been entirely lost upon them. However, I would rather be a dupe occasionally, than suspect all the world of selfishness and dishonour; for then my life would be a burthen to me; so, come what may, I acted for the best, and according to the dictates of my conscience; therefore, can never be completely wretched. God bless you, little Meyler. After all, I should not like you to forget me, neither; but you must do as you please, you know.

H.W.

As I took the thing so good-naturedly, I fancy Mr. Fisher felt a little ashamed of his want of gallantry, for he wrote me another letter, in which he tried hard to soften down the cruelty of his first, styling himself the fox and the grapes, etc. However, it would not do, and when I passed by him, coming out of church, I shook my head at him so slyly that the man was dying to laugh out, yet honourable enough to subdue his inclination, knowing I did not wish to be acknowledged by him.

I waited another month, in the vain expectation of receiving the promised allowance from the Duke of Beaufort, and then I wrote to him as follows:

Lord Worcester agreed to go abroad, on condition that I was taken care of, and I promised to remain in England for one year, during which time you pledged yourself to send me a quarterly allowance, or rather your man of business pledged himself, in your name, in the presence of your son.

I conceive a conditional engagement to be null and void, when the conditions are not fulfilled. I therefore propose immediately joining Lord Worcester in Spain, in case I do not receive a due remittance from your Grace by return of post. I cannot help

adding, that I should be very sorry to act with such want of feeling, towards my greatest enemy, as you have invariably shown towards me, who have, from first to last, made every sacrifice in my power for your peace and happiness.

I remain,

Your Grace's most obedient,

humble servant,

H. WILSON.

By return of post, I received a very polite answer from the Duke of Beaufort, inclosing me a quarter's allowance, with some very plausible excuse: I really forget what it was; but I think he said the delay was not his fault, but Mr. Robinson's. Mere nonsense, of course; since my frequent applications could not have miscarried, and His Grace never once condescended to write till I threatened to join Worcester, after which he was afraid to lose a single post.

I am now growing tired of Devonshire, and so, I hope and trust, are my readers. I propose giving them very little more news from that quarter. I remained there exactly twelve months, during which time the only two persons I beheld who had been before known to me, were Lord Berghersh, whose estates are, I believe, in that part of the world, who opened his eyes wide with astonishment, at meeting me and the old general there.

My dear mother and sister Fanny regularly corresponded with me, and Meyler was more sanguine than usual, as the year got to a close. He declared that he had no sort of fancy for anybody on earth but me, nor ever had since the very beginning of our acquaintance. Worcester also wrote, in high spirits; stating that nothing should detain him in Spain an hour after the expiration of twelve months.

At last, oh killing news! just as I was in the expectation of Worcester, to fly away with me from Charmouth, which was all in his road from Spain, came a letter, it ought to have been sealed with black wax, to say that the Prince Regent, rather than Worcester should return to love and me, was about to oblige the

Duke of Beaufort, while he gave the brave and dandy warriors of the Tenth an opportunity of distinguishing themselves. To be brief, Worcester's regiment was ordered abroad. Could he possibly, he wrote, come home at such a moment? But then, his own darling angel, sweet Harriette, would come to him! Of this he felt sure, etc.

"My dear Eliza, I must go to Spain," said I, as soon as I had finished this letter.

The whole house was in tears. How very kind, yet how unaccountable, that strangers should feel so much more for us than our own sisters, thought I.

Eliza's aunt, Martha, declared that she would accompany me to Falmouth, and see me sail. "I am old enough, and thank God I am no beauty," said Aunt Martha, "and I may do what I please with my own little fortune. I have never yet been ten miles from my native place, and I want to see the world."

Fresh floods of tears were now forced out for my Aunt Martha; however, go she would.

"The worst of it is," continued Aunt Martha, "that my habit is five and twenty years old, and as to travelling without a habit, that is quite impossible."

"I think, between us all three, we can alter it into something smart and fashionable," said Eliza, and the next hour saw them occupied in unpicking, cutting, and basting, at my Aunt Martha's most ample calico habit.

I proposed setting off in two days. Much as I dreaded the sea, and hated the idea of Spain and war, still, anything was better than thus wasting one's sweetness on the desert air: besides, I was under a sort of engagement to join Worcester, if Worcester found it impossible to return to me. Poor Meyler, thought I; and I will tell my readers a secret, I would much rather have gone to London.

I took an affectionate leave of my mother and sister, in two very long letters; but I did not write to Meyler. I wanted him to remain in doubt as to my having left Charmouth, that he might remember me the longer.

My Aunt Martha's habit was completely modernised in due time, and Mrs. Edmond and her amiable daughter passed the whole of the last day in preparing little, nice cakes, etc. for our travelling basket, which Aunt Martha was strictly charged not to lose sight of.

At last we were seated in the Falmouth mail, on a fine clear summer morning. We travelled all day and all night, and poor Aunt Martha was half dead with fatigue, on the following evening, when we were set down at the first-rate inn at Falmouth.

We begged the chambermaid to conduct us immediately to a good two-bedded room.

"Oh, ladies," announced the woman, pertly, "you must take what you can get; for we are so full that I don't know where on earth to put half of you, owing to the wind having been so directly contrary for more than three weeks. Thus ships are, every day, coming in, while all the passengers for Spain have been waiting at Falmouth these three weeks, and we have got a consul, or ambassador, or something great, of that kind, who has occupied all our best rooms for the last fortnight, with his secretaries and black footmen, and all the rest of it."

"Had we not better try another inn?" said I to my Aunt Martha.

But she declared herself so very ill and fatigued, having never travelled before, that she could not move.

"And if you could," said the chambermaid, "you would only fare the worse for your pains, since there is scarcely a bed to be found in all Falmouth."

"Well, what can you do for us?" I inquired despairingly, for I was both tired and spiritless.

"Why, as luck would have it, a gentleman as was going to Spain, is just gone off by the London mail, because he had no more patience to wait here for change of weather, and his room has got two little beds in it; but it is up in the garret."

"Never mind," said poor Aunt Martha; and we were soon

settled for the night, in a very comfortless-looking room, far away from either chambermaids or waiters, and nothing like a bell was to be discovered.

For the three first days of our inhabiting this garret, we really ran the risk of being starved, as it was impossible to procure any attendance. True, in scampering about the house to search for bread, tea, or butter, our noses were regaled by the excellent ragouts, as the consul's black servants were carrying them to their master's table.

"What a shame it is," said Aunt Martha, "that a man is to be enjoying himself in this manner, with fiddles and ragouts, while two poor women, in the same inn, are stuck up in a garret and left there to starve."

The captain of the vessel I proposed going out by, and to whom I paid, on my arrival, five and twenty guineas for my berth, was a peculiarly amiable man, and he was kind enough to invite us to dine with his wife.

We were very anxious to look about us a little; but Aunt Martha had been told that Falmouth was such a wicked town that, for four days, we had kept our room.

The fifth, finding it impossible to procure any single thing to eat, good or bad, owing to the arrival of another vessel from the Peninsula, we were absolutely forced out of our delicate alarms, and resolved to go out and purchase a cold tongue and some biscuits. However, we first took a long country walk, and enjoyed such magnificent scenery as astonished even my Aunt Martha, who declared that there was a boldness and grandeur about the views in Cornwall, which far exceeded anything she had seen in Devonshire.

As we entered the inn, after filling our reticules with eatables, we stepped back, while the Consul or Ambassador, I forget which, who ate up all our dinner, and was the chief cause of such a terrible famine in the inn, stepped into his gay carriage. I thought I had seen his face; but I really could not recollect where. He appeared to recognise me too, by the manner he looked at me. We mounted up into our dismal room, very

much out of spirits, having ascertained that the wind was exactly in the same unlucky quarter.

The next day, the chambermaid brought me a polite note from the Consul, to request the favour of our company to dinner, as often as we could make it convenient, *sans cérémonie*. He had often had the pleasure of seeing me in London, or he should not have taken the liberty, which he had the less scruple in doing, having been led to understand we were so very baldly attended on.

"Well! this is something like!" said my Aunt Martha, bridling; for I forgot to inform my readers, that my Aunt Martha was still on the right side of fifty, and though her countenance had never, even in her youngest days, possessed any other attraction than an expression of extreme good nature and animation, still that was something; and then, her habit, which was composed of curiously fine cloth, had now been altered into as becoming a form as possible. On the whole, my Aunt Martha, while she admitted I must have been the principal attraction, really did hope she had stood for something in this invitation. In short, she was in such high spirits, that in the warmth of her heart she insisted on offering the contents of our reticules to my *femme de chambre*.

"How I regret not having seen something of life a little sooner," said Aunt Martha, as she stood before the glass, settling her ruff. "I presume we shall meet those two secretaries, at dinner to-day. One of them was remarkably handsome, I thought. Of course, they will excuse our travelling dresses. They must know your trunks are all on board. I should like, notwithstanding, to purchase a small red rose for this cap: it would set it off, and look somewhat more dressy, for the evening, you know. As for you, they will be in love with you, anyhow. That's the advantage of being handsome. No matter then what one wears."

The Consul's servant now entered the room, in a gay livery, with his master's compliments, and a request to know if he was to expect the honour of our company at dinner.

"You will present our compliments, and say we propose doing ourselves that pleasure," I answered, and the servant left the room.

"The honour of our company!" repeated Aunt Martha in a kind of ecstasy. "How very polite and condescending is this Consul!"

"It is a pity he is so carroty. I thought he resembled Lord Yarmouth very much," said I. "I only hope he may turn out half as pleasant, and then I will forgive his carroty hair."

Aunt Martha was so long settling the form of her lace-cap, that the Consul and his two secretaries were waiting dinner for us when we entered the room. He politely introduced the young gentlemen to us. The name of the handsomest was Brown; I have forgotten the other. I whispered to the Consul, at the very first opportunity, that my friend was unacquainted with my situation, or the name of Lord Worcester, believing me to be an officer's wife, of the name of Wilson; and he promised to be discreet. He was a very pleasing man, of about forty-five or fifty, and, being really under such obligation to him, for his great politeness, I am particularly sorry that I cannot recollect his name. I hope, if ever he condescends to read my memoirs, that he will, through this medium, accept my thanks, and the assurance that I have not, with his name, forgotten his friendly hospitality towards us two poor unfortunate ladies.

The dinner was served up in the very best style of elegance. What a contrast to our scanty fare in our garret! After dinner, the young men proposed going to the play, since Mathews was engaged there for a few nights. The Consul, however, declared we must excuse him; but good-naturedly requested the secretaries to chaperon us there, promising to have a good supper for us on our return.

Accordingly, after our coffee, we were off, in the Consul's carriage, to the play, where we were joined by the captain of the vessel, who brought me and my Aunt Martha an invitation to a party for the following evening. The Consul and secretaries were already invited.

"Oh, if I had but slipped my new purple silk dress into my portmanteau," whispered Aunt Martha.

"Can we really be admitted in riding habits?" I inquired.

"Certainly," said the captain. "Almost the whole of the party are composed of travellers whose luggage is on board, and I have been commissioned to invite whoever I conceive most amiable: and, of course, I began here," he continued, politely bowing to us all.

"Is it a state party?" I inquired.

"I am afraid so," said the captain; "for we do not sit down to supper till past two in the morning."

"We shall kill you," said I, turning to my Aunt Martha.

"Oh dear no!" answered the good-natured woman; "I have experienced so much kindness, from every stranger at Falmouth, that gratitude will keep me broad awake." Aunt Martha was, indeed, a general favourite with young people; because she ever entered into all their little cares and vexations with so much heart, and a real desire to advise what was best and most pleasant for them. Then a dozen English people meeting at Falmouth, when they were just about to go they, some of them, knew not to whom, naturally threw off all restraint, and made them appear to each other in the light of brothers and sisters.

We found an excellent supper ready, and the good Consul was himself making us some punch, in case we should happen to be tired of champagne and claret. After supper we had a waltz. Mr. Brown kindly undertook to give my Aunt Martha her first lesson, which created much merriment. It was nearly three o'clock before we got to bed, and, in this manner we kept it up for almost three weeks, dining regularly, when not otherwise engaged, at the Consul's table.

Every evening we went either to a play or to a party, and the mornings we passed on board, or walking or riding about. My health was scarcely ever so good as during the time I spent at Falmouth, nor do I recollect ever to have been thrown into society where there was so much vivacity and wit, and no trouble in dressing for it.

I had been an unusual length of time without letters from Lord Worcester, and as I could not doubt their being immediately forwarded to me by Mrs. Edmond, if any had arrived at Charmouth, I grew uneasy; and having learned, by accident, that a young officer who had just arrived from headquarters was in the house I requested, in a note, that he would allow me to ask him a few questions. He came to me instantly, and in answer to my various inquiries about Worcester, with whom, he said, he was not personally acquainted, he hinted something of a story, that Mrs. Archdeacon, the sister of the paymaster's second wife, who formerly made such an attack on Worcester's virtue at Brighton, and who was living with her husband at Lisbon, had been ran away with by the Marquis of Worcester.

"Are you certain of this?" I inquired, without, I confess, much agitation.

He was not, he said; but it was a fact that Mrs. Archdeacon had left her husband, and gone up to the army with somebody; though, as she arrived there just as he had left headquarters on his way to England, he could not take upon himself to say that she was with Lord Worcester. He knew that the Marquess, when he last came down to Lisbon, had been in the habit of dining with Mr. Archdeacon and his wife.

This fool! thought I, after tormenting his parents, and keeping me here, lest he should die!—after refusing the prayers of his father, whose very life seemed to depend on leaving me, suddenly takes another woman away, notwithstanding his last letter was as full of solemn vows of everlasting constancy as any he ever wrote. What steadiness could I expect from such an ass as Worcester? I'll go to London: that's settled! Life is short, and I have been quite patient enough. I don't care one straw about money; but I must have something like enjoyment of some sort, before I die. Another story decided me. I heard two days after my interview with the officer, it was whispered about Lisbon, that, supposing Harriette Wilson made an attempt to join Lord Worcester, the English Ambassador had

the power to get her put on board an American ship, and sent to America!

All this might or might not be true; but certainly I was not disposed to try it. Then came more stories, from different quarters, concerning Worcester and Mrs. Archdeacon. They cannot be wholly false, thought I, or he would write. In fact there was one person, who had no sort of interest in deceiving me, and he acquainted the Consul that Mrs. Archdeacon certainly did go up to the army to join Lord Worcester, and that she was then actually staying with him.

"I have received letters which require my instant presence in London," said I to my Aunt Martha, at which, though she expressed the greatest surprise, still she was delighted, as I did not mean to leave England. The captain returned me half my five and twenty guineas, and, after taking our leave of our kind friends, who expressed sincere regret at the loss of our society, I took my place for the next day in the mail, not for Charmouth, but London.

It was a tremendously long journey; but I was tired of the country, tired of suspense, disgusted with the whole set of Beauforts, and dying to be refreshed once more by the sight of Meyler's bright, expressive countenance.

The mail stopped a short time at Charmouth, where I left my Aunt Martha, took a most affectionate leave of the whole family, and, late the next night, I arrived at my sister Fanny's house in London.

CHAPTER XX

MEYLER was in the country, unacquainted with my arrival. Fanny declared it would be absolute madness not to make the Duke do something for me, before I wrote to Meyler, and, in short, absolutely teased me, day and night, till I wrote to His Grace, to say that I was now ready to put myself under the protection of Mr. Meyler, as soon as he should have provided for me, according to his first proposal of giving me £500 a year. The Duke wrote declaring that he had never offered so much. I had the proposal of that sum from His Grace's man of business. I now offer you £300 continued the Duke, in his letter; more than that I must decline.

It was not in my nature to stick out for money, so I agreed to the £300, and the Duke set his attorney to work to draw up the papers.

In the meantime, when I least expected it, came two large parcels from Worcester. He had not seduced Mrs. Archdeacon, for Mrs. Archdeacon had followed him up to the army, whether he would or not, and he had sent her back immediately, and wished her dead for her disgusting assurance: and he adored me, etc., etc., as usual.

I then wrote to the Duke of Beaufort, to say that I could not immediately put myself under the protection of Mr. Meyler, owing to circumstances having changed; therefore he must not get the annuity made out under that idea. Soon after this, the Duke heard of Mrs. Archdeacon, and, believing his son had forgotten me, kindly wrote me word, he would now do nothing for me, and I might starve if I did not like to live with another man.

I could no longer endure the Duke's excessive selfishness calmly, and therefore assured him that I had still many letters, with promises of marriage, from Lord Worcester, written since those I had delivered up to him, trusting to the frail reeds, his generosity and honour, all which were, at that time, in my possession.

The Duke now wrote me a most insulting and impertinent letter, declaring that, if I were humble and civil, he had no objection to give me a small sum for my letters; but recommended me to be moderate in my demand, otherwise he should not think them worth attending to, or taking any notice of. This time the Duke had the honour of putting me in a passion, and I consequently wrote to this effect

Your Grace must excuse my flattering, with civility, you whose conduct has been so invariably selfish, mean, and artful towards me, as to have, at last, inspired me with perfect contempt. Having your promise of £300 provided I fulfil certain conditions, without one bit of the civil humility you recommend, I beg to acquaint you that, if the annuity is not made out directly, I will publish the promise of marriage, and put an execution into your house for the annuity.

This letter had the desired effect, and the annuity was made out immediately, although I forget what excuse the Duke offered to me for reducing it to two hundred a year, or why I consented to the reduction. This last annuity was drawn out, with a condition that I should never once write to Lord Worcester, nor hold any kind of communication with him. Mr. Treslove, of Lincoln's Inn, advised me not to accept a restricted annuity; but I declared I could not but fancy myself safe, since Worcester, of course, in case he should be the cause of my losing this, possessed too good a heart to suffer me to be unprovided for: so the thing was witnessed and signed, and I gave up all the letters once more to His Grace of Beaufort, who having written to acquaint his son of what he had done for me, and on what conditions, Lord Worcester wrote a parcel of very pathetic letters to my sister Fanny: he wished me happy: he knew well

that he should never be allowed to see me again: he did not think I could have agreed never to write or speak to him again: he had heard that I was with Mr. Meyler; but, even in that case, he could not fancy my having cut him.

Three or four letters came to Fanny, in the same style. At last, he wrote to me: it was impossible to resist addressing me, cruelly as I had left him, etc., etc.

"So it is, very mercenary, cruel, and unnatural," said I to Fanny, after having finished His Lordship's letter to me: "in short, were he to be killed abroad, I should never enjoy another hour's rest": and, in spite of all they could say or do to prevent me, I wrote to tell Worcester, that I trusted to God, and to his good heart, for seeing that I was somehow provided for; but that nothing should again induce me to cut him, while I believed him still fond of me, and unhappy for my sake.

Soon after I had dispatched this letter, the first half year of the allowance becoming due, I received £100 from the Duke of Beaufort's attorney, and in less than a month afterwards, the same attorney applied to me for the £100 back again——

"What do you mean, pray?" I asked.

"Why," answered the attorney, "Lord Worcester has acquainted his father that you have written to him, and therefore, since you are not entitled to that £100, the Duke insists on its being returned."

"Upon your honour, does the Duke really wish to take from me the means of existence, even if I effectually, and for ever, separate myself from his son?"

"Of course," answered the attorney.

"And the Duke of Beaufort wishes to see the woman who, but for her generosity and feeling towards his family, had long since been his daughter, thrown on the wide world without a shilling?"

"He certainly is very angry with me for having paid you the £100, which I must lose out of my own pocket if you do not return it, since His Grace, being no longer obliged to do anything, will never give you twenty pounds as long as he lives."

"Not if I continue separated from Worcester?"

"Certainly not, even then. The fact is, His Grace believes that his son has left you altogether."

"What, then, is to become of me?"

"That is a matter of perfect indifference to His Grace, and also to me. I only want to know if you mean to oblige me to obtain the hundred pounds back again by law." I rang the bell. "Show this man downstairs," said I, and I retired to my dressing-room.

Strange as it may appear, I was not, in any respect, put out of spirits at the idea of having lost £200 a year, and I do not believe I should, at that time, have eaten less dinner than usual, if I had lost £200 again: so little did I care for money, or anything money could buy, beyond clean linen, and bread and milk; but I was deeply hurt to think that, do what I would to deserve it, no one would like me: and there was nothing on earth, half so desirable, half so consoling, to me, as the esteem and steady friendship of others. For this I had left the gay world, and buried myself in a village. It was to ensure the esteem of the Beauforts, that I refused to become one of them, and certainly, as I told the Duke when he called on me, Dowager Duchess sounds better than Dowager Dolly. Alas! no one cared for me! In a very desponding temper, I sat down and wrote to Meyler, as follows:

It is long, very long, since I heard from you, and, like the rest of the world, I take it for granted you have forgotten me, else I had been yours, and yours only, as long as you were disposed to protect me. I always liked you; but twice the love I ever felt towards you would not have made me act unfeelingly towards anybody breathing, while I knew or fancied they deserved my gratitude. The reward for this steadiness in what I believed was right, is, that all have forsaken me: even Lord Worcester has turned against me, and written me romantic professions latterly, in cold blood, on purpose, as it seems, to betray me, by the goodness of my heart, with sending him an answer, which, by law, would deprive me of the small annuity which had been granted for my future existence.

The money is nothing!—I never cared about money; but all this harsh treatment wounds me more than I can describe to you. And you, too, have forgotten me, n'est-ce pas? *If you have not, I hope you will tell me so, by return of post. In the meantime, God bless you, dear Meyler.*

HARRIETTE WILSON.

By the earliest post, Meyler wrote me a letter, the style of which was unusually romantic. He should be in town on the same day I received his answer. He had believed me in Spain, and had relinquished all hopes of me for ever. He had won a considerable wager by my dear, kind letter; but was too happy to enrich himself at any man's expense, therefore refused to accept a guinea of it. *I don't think*, Meyler went on, *I don't believe you would again say I am cold, if you could read my heart at this moment, and understand how deeply impressed I feel, with gratitude towards my beloved Harriette. Never mind Worcester's annuity, for you and I will never part.*

I would not marry any woman on earth, and I am sure I shall never entertain so high an opinion of another, as I have had good reason to encourage towards you: so yours, beloved Harriette, for ever, and ever: full of happiness and haste to follow this letter, yours most devotedly affectionate,

RICHARD WILLIAM MEYLER.

It is not my intention to dwell on Meyler's love, or Meyler's raptures, since such subjects, in prose, are very prosy. Meyler struck me as having grown much more handsome than when we last parted; but this might be only my own fancy, having seen nothing like a beauty, except beau Fisher, during the last twelve months.

We hired a very excellent house in the New Road, close to Gloucester Place, and, for the first fortnight we were both in love, and did not quarrel: but, alas! in rather less than three weeks, I discovered that Meyler, the lively Meyler, was one of the worst tempered men in all England! This was very hard upon one who, like myself, had been spoiled and indulged by a man who was ever a slave to my slightest caprices! I cannot

describe Meyler's temper, for I never met with anything, in the way of temper, at all to be compared to his. It was a sort of a periodical temper; and when he had passed a whole day in sweet soft conversation, I was perfectly sure that a storm was at hand for the next day, and vice versa.

At first I would not stand it, the least in the world; and used to kick him out of bed the moment he began to run restive, and then he would turn out, in the middle of the night, to return to his house in Grosvenor Square, and I, to show my indifference, would make a point of joining any gay evening parties. The next day, Meyler never failed to make his appearance, looking most penitent, arch, and beautiful.

"Why don't you cut her dead for two or three days," said Amy to Meyler, "and rely upon it, she would sneak after you, and that would be much better than your sneaking after her in this manner."

"So I would, Mrs. Sydenham," Meyler used to answer; so I would, only some man would————in the meantime, perhaps."

In fact, I must confess I was sometimes a very tyrant towards Meyler; and yet I know my temper is naturally good; but my feelings towards Meyler were all made up of passion. I neither esteemed nor trusted him; and yet I was never so jealous of any other man. There was, in fact, an expression in Meyler's countenance, of such voluptuous beauty, that it was impossible for any woman to converse with him, after he had dined, in cold blood. One night, as he sat in the Duchess of Beaufort's box, I left my own, and sent in the box-keeper, on the Duchess's side of the house, to request he would come out and speak to a person in the passage. He immediately obeyed my summons. "Meyler," said I, in a hurried tone of voice, "if you return, even for an instant, to the Duchess of Beaufort's box, we part this night, and for ever. I cannot endure it."—"Then I will stay with you, all the evening," said Meyler, flattered rather than angry with me, for such jealousy, as he knew I had never felt towards Lord Worcester.

"Why will you agitate yourself for nothing?" said Meyler, when we got home, this being his good-tempered night.

"You know you did once love the Duchess of Beaufort," I replied.

"Never," said Meyler. "Worcester and I, you know, were at Christchurch together," he continued, "and one day, when I was too young to have ever compassed an intrigue in any higher line than what boys usually find in the streets of Oxford, he presented me to his mother, who, you know, is a very fine woman of her age: this you will the more readily admit, because there is certainly a very striking resemblance, in your picture. No woman, in fine clothes, would have come amiss to me at that time; and I certainly felt a very strong desire for the Duchess; but without entertaining the shadow of a hope, notwithstanding she always distinguished me with unusual attention, as you must have heard from others as well as from myself; till, one night when I was staying at Badminton, in the absence of the Duke, I happened to say that the cold had affected my lips, and made them sore. It was as late as twelve o'clock. Her Grace desired me to accompany her to her dressing-room, that she might give me some cold cream. When I entered, her night-clothes were hanging to air, near the fire. We were alone. I hesitated. In another instant, I might have ventured to take this midnight invitation as a hint; but unluckily, my Lady Harrowby, who probably suspected something improper, entered the room like our evil genius."

This story Meyler was in the habit of repeating to his friends, and I particularly remember his inquiring of Mr. Napier, who is also a friend of Her Grace of Beaufort's, whether he imagined the Duchess might have been had on that evening; and Napier said, in answer, that whoever, in the absence of her husband, was to invite him to her dressing-room at midnight, he should feel bound, in common gallantry towards her, to attempt——— whether he had felt disposed or not.

Meyler has repeated this story to so many people besides myself, Napier, and Sir Harry Mildmay, that it will be folly to

affect a denial of it. Meyler's greatest enemy never accused him, yet, of uttering an untruth.

Meyler led me but an unhappy life, during the first year of our living together. His jealousy was downright selfishness; for he would be jealous of my pianoforte, if that instrument amused me. He was, in fact, always jealous, unless I was counting the minutes of his absence. If I procured a private box, to witness a play, *tête-à-tête* with my sister Fanny, he would send a note, by his coachman, to this effect: *Dearest Harriette, I send a carriage to convey you to the play, to prove my wish to put no restraint on your wishes; but if, for my sake, you would stay at home, I should feel both grateful and happy, and will return to you as soon as possible.*

He often left me, to pass a week with the Beauforts at Badminton, and this never failed to render me completely wretched. "My God," said Meyler one day, striking his head violently with his hand, "what am I to do? I would rather blow my brains out, than be thus the slave of any woman. Mine is not the passion of a day, or a year. I shall never cease to love you; but I must enjoy a little liberty."

I was much struck with what Meyler said. This sort of affection may be more lasting than Worcester's late unnatural rapture, which went off all at once, thought I to myself; and Meyler is so rich! so very, very beautiful, and it would be so shocking to lose him altogether. I will therefore put up with him, in his own way, as long as I have reason to believe him constant to me. I ought to be grateful, since I know that half the women in London would fain tempt him to forget me.

The next day, Meyler agreed to dine with me, and set off, after dinner, to Badminton. He came, I know, in fear and trembling, for he expected me to fret, and shed tears, as usual, at the idea of his going to Badminton. So far from it, I played him all his favourite airs on the pianoforte, gave him an excellent dinner, and drank my proper allowance of Champagne, with spirit; hoped he might pass a pleasant week at Badminton, and,

feeling full confidence in his affection, should make myself happy, with my books and music, till he returned.

"What is the matter," I asked, suddenly observing that he could neither eat nor drink. He only sighed!

"Do, my pretty, little Meyler, tell me what you would be at?"

"It would be impossible for you to keep up such delightful spirits, knowing I am about to visit a fine woman, if you loved me," said Meyler, despondingly!

"Oh, nonsense!" I exclaimed, "you have assured me you never mean to leave me, and I believe you, because you never yet told me a lie; and a jealous woman is the most disgusting animal imaginable, you know; so let us enjoy time present, since you are so soon to leave me."

"I see you are delighted to get rid of me," said Meyler, "and I could never love, nor believe in the love of any woman who was not madly jealous of me. I see your affection, and therefore I hate you, Harriette: so, in order to punish you, I will not go to Badminton at all."

"Bravo! You'll stay then with me?" said I, kissing him. "Indeed, indeed, I but acted with indifference from dread of disgusting you; but now, since you will stay, I am so very, very happy."

Meyler, being satisfied that it would make me miserable, set off for Badminton early the next morning. In the evening, I went to my sister Amy's, where, among many others, I met Lord Hertford. "Is it possible, think you," I inquired of His Lordship, "is it possible to pass one's life with a man of bad temper?"

"Better live on a bone," answered His Lordship, with his mouth full of cold partridge.

"What do you know about living on a bone?" I asked, laughing at him.

"Oh, pray make up your mind, at once, to leave that vile, ill-tempered Meyler," said Fanny; "for his jealousy is really mere selfishness, and though he goes to balls and parties every

night of his life, and does not return till five or six in the morning, he never fails to call here for Harriette, in ten minutes after she is set down, declaring he is miserable till he knows her to be safe in bed, and there he leaves her."

"Cut him, cut him, by all means," said everybody at once, and then they talked of Worcester. Fanny had received a letter from him on that very day.

"I understand that Harriette and Meyler are living in a house we once inhabited together," said His Lordship's letter. "Do, pray, tell her from me, I wish her joy of her philosophy; but I do not profess any such feelings. I never could inhabit that house, at all events, with any other woman."

This letter would have affected me, some time before; but I was now sick and disgusted with the Beauforts and all their proceedings; neither could I reconcile to myself the idea of Worcester having made his father acquainted with the letter he induced me to write, and so lost me my annuity.

Lord Hertford wanted to set me down; but I positively refused. "Well, then," whispered His Lordship, "you really must pay me a visit at my little private door in Park Lane. You say you are going to the play to-morrow night, and you know you can rely on my discretion. The King dines with me; but His Majesty will leave me before the play is over, and I will open the door for you myself, after my people are gone to bed, and you shall find everything ready and comfortable."—"You may then depend on seeing me," said I, and I took my leave.

The next evening, Fanny, Julia, and I were all seated in a private box, at Covent Garden, by seven o'clock, accompanied by two friends of theirs, whose names I have forgotten; and we were, I think, afterwards visited at the theatre by Lord Rivers.

"Are you hungry?" said I to Julia, just as the curtain dropped.

"Very," they both answered in a breath; and Fanny declared that nothing made her so hungry as sitting out a long play, after hurrying to it before she had half finished her dinner. I said that we now lived in the age of fairies, and that a good-natured

one would, this night, tap some door with her wand, and it should fly open and disclose a magnificent repast, served out on gold and silver, and composed of every delicacy which could possibly be imagined.

"What is the use of putting one in mind of all these good things," said Fanny, "when, for my part, I shall think myself happy if my maid has saved us a bone of mutton, or even half a pint of porter, these hard times?"

"No, what would you say if I had discovered a fairy, witch, or magician, who would, this very night, do all I have named for us?"

They were a long while before they would listen to me; but from my earnestness they at last really began to think I had hit upon some odd plan of giving them a fine supper, and promised to be led by me. Both of them had, once, been shown Lord Hertford's private apartments, some years back, from Seymour Place; but they had never seen the little private entrance out of Park Lane, and had nearly forgotten the whole together. We were set down, by my desire, at some short distance from Lord Hertford's little private door, and it was such a dark night, I was obliged to feel my way to it.

"Where on earth are you taking us to?" said Julia, in alarm. "Here are no houses, and this place is really dangerous. For God's sake let us return to the carriage directly."

"Pray don't be alarmed, and, in half a minute, you shall see what the good fairy has provided for us."

Having arrived at the little low door, which resembles that of a cellar, I tapped gently, three times, and the door was immediately opened by Lord Hertford, who was, absolutely, struck almost dumb at observing that he had three fair ladies to entertain instead of one. He just looked.

> How happy could I be with either,
> Were t'other dear charmers away.

However, though of course he was disappointed, he was too well-bred to complain; and therefore turned the whole affair

into a joke, saying he cut a comical figure, coming downstairs thus slyly, with his miniature key, to let in a whole party!

The little winding staircase, covered with red cloth, conducted us to his beautiful apartments, where a magnificent supper was laid, just in the fairy style I had described. Everybody was agreeably surprised except His Lordship, who fully expected to have passed the evening *tête-à-tête* with me. Nevertheless, I must say, he contrived to support this terrible disappointment with infinite good humour, and we returned, at three in the morning, delighted with our English night's entertainment, in which we partook the feast of conviviality as well as of reason, and the flow of wine as well as of soul.

Meyler returned to town in less time than he had named, because some man had laughed at the idea of my being constant. He soon began to quarrel again, as usual. At the opera he was offended if I stood in the room with my sisters. "I will retire before the curtain drops, if you accompany me," I used to say; but Meyler had fifty people to chat with in the round room. He was a particular friend of Sir Harry Mildmay. Both were Hampshire men, and members of the same county; and the gay Sir Harry had ever a mind for all his friends' wives or mistresses, ugly or handsome: he was, therefore, continually setting us by the ears; merely because I was among the few who had refused him.

"Meyler," he would say, after having seen him standing near me in the room at the opera, "Meyler, why the deuce do you stand there with Harriette Wilson every night, like a frightful shepherd, to be laughed at. Why don't you take to intriguing with women of fashion? Do you know, man, that you are by no means an ugly fellow?"

"I never thought I was anything like an ugly fellow, Sir Harry," answered Meyler, speaking slowly.

On another opera night, as I was waiting at the top of the stairs, with my sister Fanny, for Meyler to take me home, Sir Harry came flying up to me, in affected surprise. "You here!" he exclaimed—"Why I thought it was your ghost?"

"How so?"

"I really imagined that it was you who went out just now with Meyler!"

"Is Meyler really gone without me, then?"

"I have this instant seen him hand a lady into his carriage, and step in after her," answered the Baronet.

I felt myself reddening with indignation. It rained fast. Fanny and Julia were going, in Mr. Napier's chariot, quite a different road, and there was no place to spare for me, and not a soul left in the room, except Lady Heathcote and her party, and Amy, who was watching me, at a distance, with a host of beaux. "My carriage is much at your service," said Sir Harry Mildmay, "and I shall be very happy to set you down at your own door."

"What, has Meyler gone off, and left you here by yourself?" said Amy, joining us, and speaking loud enough for Lady Heathcote to hear. Her Ladyship looked as if she was much amused with the whole occurrence. I have a terrible proud spirit of my own, and, greatly as I disliked the idea of seeming to encourage Sir Harry Mildmay, the temptation was now irresistible; so, putting my arm under his, and skipping gaily past Doctor Bankhead's dear friend, Lady Heathcote, I said I would forgive Meyler for cutting me, as often as he was disposed to send me such a very amiable substitute. It was a dark night, and Mildmay's coachman drove like mad. Judge my surprise, on finding myself set down at Sir Harry's house in Brook Street, when I thought I was in the New Road. Sir Harry took hold of my hand, as I stood on his steps, and laughingly tried to pull me into his house.

"Really, Sir Harry, this is too absurd! Eloping with me as though I were an innocent fool, who could be led to do any one thing which clashes with my humour!"

Sir Harry, at last, finding it impossible, either by jokes or earnestness, to induce me to enter his house, begged I would get into his carriage to be carried to my own house.

"No," said I. "No power on earth shall induce me to enter your carriage again."

My anger towards Meyler, for his supposed neglect, having now cooled, I was beginning to be very unhappy about him, and very much out of humour with Sir Harry.

"I will walk home," I said, "or at least walk till I can find a coach, and I insist on your leaving me this instant."

"That, my sweet Harriette, is quite impossible: and since you are so obstinate as to insist on risking to catch your death of cold, by walking home without a bonnet, I must accompany you."

"It is quite fine again now," answered I, and off I set, accompanied by Sir Harry, having first fastened my shawl over my head.

My house in the New Road had a garden before it. I felt dreadfully afraid of finding Meyler there; and I almost wished Mildmay to remain at hand to protect me; in case he should grow violent before I could convince him of my innocence.

"If Meyler is not there, I will come in," said Sir Harry. I was really astonished at his assurance.

"What do you think Meyler would say, if he found you in his house?" I inquired.

"Oh! hang Meyler! we would lock him out."

I could not refrain from laughing at Mildmay's excessive impudence.

"Is Mr. Meyler in the house?" I tremulously asked of the servant, who was coming down the garden to open the gate for us. The maid told me that Mr. Meyler had been there half an hour ago, and appeared much agitated when they informed him I was not returned from the Opera House.

"Where did he direct his coachman to drive to?"

"I think to Mrs. Sydenham's, ma'am," was the reply.

I said that Mildmay was determined to enter the house with me; and, dreading the consequences of such a very mad action, I desired the servant to shut us out, since I should go and look for Mr. Meyler.

"Don't, don't," said Mildmay; but I insisted, and the street door was closed upon us. We stood in the garden; and then, for

near a quarter of an hour, I begged, entreated, and implored Mildmay to leave me, but in vain. Every instant I expected the return of Meyler: yet, frightened and agitated as I was, under the impression that I had thoughtlessly committed an imprudence, for which I was likely to pay very dear, Sir Harry would have no mercy on me.

At last, as good luck would have it, two drunken men observed us among the trees, as they passed the house. It being rather moonlight, and, not dreaming that the owner of it would be standing there, at two o'clock in the morning, with a gay man in silk stockings, they naturally concluded me to be some poor creature he had met with in the streets; so, knocking with their sticks between the iron railings of the gate, they bawled out, "I'll trouble you, sir, for ground-rent, if you please."

"Ground-rent! ground-rent! D——n your impudence," said Sir Harry, running after them; and I immediately knocked till my servant opened the door, when I rushed into the passage, and safely barred out the gay Baronet, in spite of his irresistible beauty.

In about another half-hour, Meyler's carriage drove up to my door. I was in a dreadful fright; for the provoking Mildmay had confessed to me, at last, that he had not seen Meyler go out; but, on the contrary, he had left him in the upper room, talking to Lord Palmerston. It was past three o'clock in the morning. I knew him to be very passionate. He will kill me, of course, said I to myself, as he entered the room. Judge what was my surprise, when Meyler, pale and trembling, took hold of my hands, kissed them, and then fixed his very expressive inquiring eyes on my face.

"You will not deceive me," said he: "of this I am quite certain."

I immediately declared, upon my word, I had nothing to conceal, having done nothing wrong.

Meyler was in raptures.

"When I came into the room to look for you, with the intention of bringing you home," said Meyler, "the first person

I saw was Lady Heathcote; and I could not help thinking she looked very oddly at me, and as if she had been inclined to laugh at something; and then I missed you from amongst your sisters. Having, upon inquiry, been told by Amy that Mildmay had taken you away in his own carriage, I asked for Julia and Fanny; but they were gone with Napier; and to Julia's house I drove immediately. They knew nothing of you; and Napier laughed so, at my evident agitation, and would have made such fun of me, all over the town, that my fear of the world, for which you always scold me so much, made me put the most violent restraint upon myself, to endeavour to conceal my anxiety, by remaining quietly where I was for a quarter of an hour. However, they saw through it all; and I left them, to call at your sister Amy's house. Amy said everything she possibly could, to make me believe you were with Mildmay. I left her in disgust; and determined to come here, once more, before I called on Sir Harry."

I then told Meyler by what falsehoods Mildmay had induced me to accept his protection.

"I shall never be the least angry with Sir Harry, as long as you steadily refuse him," said Meyler; "because I have, for some time, wanted such a story to laugh at him about; he having so many against me, with which he takes upon himself to amuse the females of my acquaintance."

This accident roused the little indolent Meyler to pay me unusual attention, for the next several weeks. *Ainsi va le monde!*

One morning, when I called on him at his house in Grosvenor Square, I found him reclined on his chaise lounge, in a very pensive attitude. On a table, before him, was a most unbecoming military cap, which appeared to belong to the militia, or might have been worn, for aught I knew, by the hero of some corps of volunteers.

"What is the matter, Meyler? and why is that frightful cap stuck up before you?"

"Ah!" said Meyler, with his usual slight, but sentimental

sigh, "frightful indeed! Fancy a little, quiet, country-gentleman, like myself, sticking such a thing as that on his head!"

"What necessity can there possibly be, for disfiguring yourself so?"

"Why, you see, I am obliged to be Captain of the Hampshire militia, of which Lord Palmerston is Colonel and Commander," continued Meyler, heaving another sigh, and looking most interestingly pensive, while his eyes were steadily fixed on the cap.

I could not help laughing; for there was, in fact, an originality about Meyler's manner of saying mere trifles, which it would be impossible to describe. And then he spoke so very slow, and his mouth was such a model of beauty, that even nonsense came gracefully out of it.

"Meyler has brought his large dog over with him, from Hampshire," said Mildmay to me one evening at the opera; "and he is at least half an hour saying his name."

"What is his name?"

"Why Ch-a-n-c-e," answered Sir Harry, mimicking him.

"Meyler is not stupid," said I.

"Why, no," replied Mildmay. "Meyler possesses a good understanding, when one can give him a fortnight to consider things; but whenever impulse is required, he is of no use on earth."

"I don't k-n-o-w t-h-a-t," I rejoined, imitating Meyler. "Some of his impulses are particularly good, I assure you."

Two days after the cap had made its appearance, Meyler's regimentals came home, with yellow facings; the ugliest, most vulgar-looking things which could well be imagined. Meyler, too, had anything but the *air militaire* which ought to have set them off and made the best of them. He was a little quiet hero of the old school, with the most beautifully delicate white hands, and he always wore silk stockings, nankeen breeches, and small knee buckles.

At last arrived a letter from the great Commander-in-Chief! !

Lord Palmerston. I have not a copy of His Lordship's letter, so that I do not mean to say that what follows is verbatim, though the said epistle was shown to me at the time, and my memory is not apt to be treacherous.

MY DEAR MEYLER,

It really is incumbent on us, as a matter of glory, as well as honour, to attend to our regimental duties, and, as I understand your tailor has carried home your handsome regimentals, with bright yellow facings, I trust you will accompany me into Hampshire next Tuesday, for the purpose of drawing our men out in a line, and making them go through their manœuvres, etc.

Yours, dear Meyler, very truly,
PALMERSTON.

Meyler, having perused the above letter, began by equipping himself in his bran-new, bright red and yellow regimentals, and having placed himself opposite his large swing looking-glass for about a quarter of an hour, the next thing he did was to throw off his gay uniform in a passion, and then he sat down and addressed the following answer to Viscount Palmerston.

MY DEAR LORD PALMERSTON,

Unfortunately I happened to be subpœnaed at the House of Commons for Tuesday night, which is what I regret, of course, infinitely; but, be assured, I will not fail to distinguish myself in arms, as soon as I have disposed of the Catholic bill. In the meantime believe me very truly yours,
RICHARD MEYLER.

"Do you know that Lord Worcester is expected to bring home the next dispatches?" said Fanny to me one night, when we met in our opera box.

"It is all the same to me," I replied, "since he could be so selfish and vilely shabby as to acquaint his father I had written to him. I shall never respect or like him again."—"Yet," said Fanny, "I have this morning received a letter from His Lordship, who writes of you in a very tender style. *A friend of mine,*

says His Lordship's letter, *saw my sweet, darling Harriette in Hyde Park, looking lovely. God bless her! What would I give, but to see her pass, at this moment, even though she refused to acknowledge me.*"

"Oh, that's enough," said I, interrupting Fanny, "I am quite in a fidget, and cannot guess what Meyler is about, that he does not visit us to-night, as usual. I understand he is going to the Duke of Devonshire's dress party, and the idea torments me wretchedly."

I turned many an anxious glance towards the Duchess of Beaufort's box, in vain, as well as towards the door of my own. The curtain dropped without our having seen anything of Meyler.

As I was descending the grand staircase, in a very ill humour, a well-known voice, from a little dark passage, called me by my name. Conceive my astonishment at seeing Meyler, screwed up into a close corner, quite alone, in full regimentals. Fanny and I began to laugh heartily at him.

"Good gracious, Mr. Meyler, is it you? Why not show yourself to the admiring world, after the trouble of making yourself so very fine?" said Julia.

"I am going to the Duke of Devonshire's dress-ball, where there will be plenty more fools in the same ridiculous sort of costume; and where, I hope, I shall not feel so much ashamed of myself: but here, I cannot for the life of me summon courage to face my acquaintance; and so, here have I been stuck up, in the dark, for the last two hours, trying to get to your box: yet ashamed even to venture to my own carriage, till everybody shall have left the house." How we, all three, did laugh at the poor little interesting hero! and yet he looked so handsome, and his red coat reflected such a fine glowing tint on his transparent, pale cheeks, that I was selfish and wicked enough to determine against his exhibiting himself at His Grace of Devonshire's. Lord Hertford joined us in our little dark corner.

"Do not go, Meyler," said I, "pray do not go to the Duke's to-night."

"And why not?" Lord Hertford asked.

"Because it will make me wretched," I answered.

"However," said Meyler, "this is the first time of my being invited; and as all the world will be there, I really must go. You may take my carriage, and I will get home to you as soon as possible."

"Do you return to Grosvenor Square first?" I inquired.

"Yes," said Meyler, as he handed me into his carriage; and then directed the coachman to take me home; but I had scarcely got into Piccadilly, when the fit of jealousy seized me with such overpowering violence, that I suddenly pulled the check-string, and requested to be conducted to Meyler's house. When there, I, unannounced, walked up into his dressing-room.

"Meyler," said I, "I have given way, at all times, to your caprice and jealousy. This once, humour mine, and I shall feel most grateful. My health and spirits are low to-night. Pray cut the Duke, and return with me. It is the first time I ever interfered with your amusements, therefore do not refuse me." Meyler was obstinate.

"Well, then," said I, "I shall not return home alone. I propose going to Lord Ebrington's, and making love to him." This speech would have disgusted most men; but I knew Meyler.

"I am sure you would not leave me for Ebrington, handsome as he is," said Meyler.

"Upon my word I will, and this very night, if he is to be found, and you refuse to return with me."—"Well, then, I must return with you," said poor Meyler, throwing off his unfortunate regimentals, and preparing to accompany me home.

The next time I met Lord Hertford, he told me I was very wrong, and ought to have had more sense than to have attempted bringing Meyler home by force.

"You, on the contrary, are very right, my Lord," answered I: "but then I really could not help it."

Soon after this, Meyler went to hunt in Leicestershire, where, according to the rules of their society, I was told I could not accompany him. However, though Meyler and I were eternally

at variance when together, yet we were ever miserable and jealous whilst separate. One day I lost all patience: and, ordering post-horses, went to join him at Melton by surprise. He appeared delighted to see me; and I was invited to dine, every day I should remain in Leicestershire, at their club. The house was very comfortable, and their dinners most excellent; so much so that I remember Meyler afterwards enticed away their man-cook, who died in his house in Grosvenor Square. And further, I remember that, while the said dead cook's body was in Meyler's house, his religious feelings would not permit him to peruse some books which were lent him, I believe, by Lord Alvanley. These books, to say the least and best of them, were what Lord F. Bentinck would have called very loose.

The members of the Melton club led what I considered a very stupid sort of life. They were off at six in the morning, dressed up in old single-breasted coats which once had been red, and came back to dinner at six. While they sat at table, it was the constant habit of a few wretched, squalid prostitutes to come and tap at their windows, when those who were not too sleepy were seen to sneak out of the room. The rest snored and drank till ten, and went to bed till hunting-time again. The carroty-haired Charlton contrived to become a member of this club. I allude to the young gentleman who was concerned with Horace Seymour in the seduction of two young mantua-makers, and who then lamented, with so much real pathos, the sad loss of his circulars.

This man would not have been ever tolerated at Melton, but that Brummell once said he used good perfume. Still Meyler was such a sturdy, true, obstinate English country-gentleman, as to pronounce the man half-bred, impudent, and a bore.

"And then," said Lord Alvanley, who was sitting with us at dinner, one day when Charlton happened to be absent, "and then he has such a d——d impertinent way of nick-naming us all fools."

"True," replied Berkeley Craven, "that is really disagreeable."

"I think we ought to take notice of it," said Meyler.

You don't say so?" observed Alvanley, growing pale. "But then," continued Alvanley, "it is not my turn, you know."

"Quite the contrary," retorted Meyler, "you are the man he has most insulted. Don't you recollect; the other night, besides calling you fool, he accused you of being an old clothesman?"

"Oh! that was because I am so often in the society of Jews."

No, it was when you were selling one of your greatcoats, if I remember right," retorted Meyler.

"I see no harm in that," Berkeley Craven remarked. "I am sure I would sell anything I did not want, and I don't care to whom."

"Then, I suppose, Berkeley, you would have no objection to part with that coat?" said Meyler, alluding to a very threadbare one worn that evening by Mr. Craven, and speaking in his usual slow way.

Brummell, who had done us the honour to come over from the Duke of Rutland's, where he was staying, to dine with us, said that though he knew little of the man, Charlton, he could not but repeat, in common justice, what he had before stated, namely, that the perfume he used, on his pocket handkerchief, was unusually good.

The evening hunt dress is red, lined with white, and the buttons, and whole style of it, are very becoming. I could not help remarking that these gentlemen never looked half so handsome, anywhere in the world, as when, glowing with health, they took their seats at dinner in the dress and costume of the Melton hunt; and, when the signal of those horrible, dirty prostitutes was slyly attended to, by either Mildmay, Lord Herbert, or Berkeley Craven, I could not help saying, *Mon Dieu! Quel dommage!* Once, Meyler got into a desperate rage, and declared me to be such a loose, profligate, wicked woman, that he was really afraid to leave the room, even for an instant, lest I should offer myself to some of those very handsome and most amorously disposed young gentlemen, as an indoor substitute for the dirty, shivering, frail ones without; but this my readers are aware was vile, infamous scandal! since there

exists not the man or woman who can prove I was ever unfaithful in my life, while I professed truth, and while I believed others true to me. But we are told, now I come to reflect, that whosoever has even thought about it, hath committed adultery in her heart. And so, with regard to Melton, and thinking about it, I really do not know what excuse to make for the thought, which, I am afraid, did strike me, very forcibly indeed. However, of course, every rule has an exception; and, if women will tap at windows, for the sole purpose, and beautiful young men will retire for the sole purpose, why the idea is forced upon one; and, whether one likes it or not, is all a chance, you know.

A day or two after this conversation about Charlton, that gentleman happened, by mere accident, of course, to say to Alvanley, in answer to some remark he made about hunting, "Oh! Lord bless your soul, no! This is talking like a fool."

"Look you here, my good fellow," said Lord Alvanley, lisping in his usual queer way, "I will tell you what: you have got a trick of calling me a fool, which is what I dislike exceedingly, from the first. In fact, I should have taken notice of it long ago, only I happen to be so devilishly afraid of fighting. The fact is well known. In short I proved it, beyond a doubt, by cutting the army altogether, directly I found that sort of thing was going on. I went into the army, it is true, but, then, as I have often mentioned to my friends before, I conceived my regiment to be kept entirely as a bodyguard to His Majesty. In other words, I never expected it would have left London."

Everybody began to laugh, except Charlton, who did not exactly know how to take it.

"Gentlemen," added Alvanley, moving towards them, "it is not particularly feeling in you to laugh, when I am discussing a subject which is so very awful to me as fighting, and particularly at a moment when I am likely to become a principal."

He then turned his head towards Mr. Charlton, and resumed his discourse as follows:

"Now, you see, sir, my fears being so excessive, as to fighting, I will give you leave to call me fool twice more, after to-day;

but, by God, if you call me so a third time, during the whole course of my life, it is all over with me; for you and I must fight!"

It so happened, as I have been very credibly informed, that lordly Charlton left off calling people fools from that hour. Not that I mean to insinuate he was the least afraid of fighting: on the contrary, I rather imagine he must have, just at the time, hit upon Doctor Watts's hymns, and been edified by them. They are really very good reading, for a Sunday, at Melton, and if I remember right, there are two very impressive lines, in one of the hymns, well calculated to work a reform in Mr. Charlton. They run thus:

> And he is in danger of hell-fire,
> Who calls his brother fool.

CHAPTER XXI

I FORGET whether Meyler got tired of me, or I of Melton, or of him; but, certain it is, I very soon returned to town. Meyler had no mind, no romance about him. His person was charming; but that won't do, even with gentleman-like manners, for one's everyday companion. Meyler was not up to me, either in hand or heart.

I could have been more constant, I often used to say to myself, by way of excuse, when I felt anything like a new fancy coming across my imagination; but then he who suited me was married, and how can such an active mind, such a warm imagination, live on air?

These reflections used to occur to me latterly, as often as I happened to meet Lord Ebrington, with whom I had now only a mere bowing acquaintance. Formerly, when I was very young, we had, mutually, sought each other. I always thought him very handsome and sensible-looking, and what, to me, is better than all the rest, he appeared as shy, proud, and as reserved, as Lord Ponsonby; but, on acquaintance, we had discovered that we were too much alike in temper to agree. Afraid of each other, we could do nothing together, so we cut in a week; except as to the mere bow, which could not, in common civility, be avoided, when we passed each other.

Lately, since I had found Meyler's temper become so provoking, it had struck me, more than once, that, if Ebrington were to try again, we might agree better. However, there were three reasons why I did not make the first advances to His Lordship. In the first place, though Meyler was a torment to me, my jealousy prevented me from throwing him upon the

world: in the second, I could not deceive any man: in the third, I said to myself, why should Lord Ebrington like me now, when my health and freshness are gone, though he did not care for me in the days of my earliest youth and beauty! The case is hopeless, thought I, after casting one wishful look, behind me, on Lord Ebrington, who, meeting me, on my entrance into town from Leicestershire, smiled sweetly, as he made me a very graceful bow; therefore I'll finish writing my play, which I began so long ago, instead. I took it from Molière's celebrated comedy of Le Malade Imâginaire; but it was by no means a literal translation. I reduced it to three acts, and altered what I conceived was too coarse and indecent for an English audience. It only afforded me, altogether, employment for three days, and, when done, I was far from sanguine as to its success. What indeed could I be expected to know concerning the Drama, who had seen so few plays in my life?

Being acquainted with Mr. Charles Young, the performer, I ventured to request him to look over my dramatic labours. In three or four days he called upon me.

"Do you know," said he, "that this is a very clever work?"

"You don't say so?" answered I.

"How you happen to be so capital, in this way, I cannot conceive, since you can have found little time for study. However, this being such a hasty scrawl, you must get it fairly copied, and I will then present it to the manager, Mr. Charles Kemble, with very little doubt of its success."

A friend of my own was kind enough to transcribe my comic efforts for me, and I returned it to Mr. Young, who sent me a note, to acknowledge its receipt, in these words:

MY DEAR MISS WILSON,

I have received your manuscript, and shall lose no time in presenting it to the managers, who will bring it out immediately, that is, if they know a good thing when they see it.

Yours truly,

C. YOUNG.

In about a week, the managers returned my little comedy to Mr. Young, stating, in a note, which that gentleman forwarded to me, that they did not think it calculated to forward the interests of the stage, etc. I know not whether Young or the managers were wrong, in their opinion of this piece; but certainly I bore the disappointment with much philosophy, having only written it *pour passer le temps*.

As I had really and truly formed a very high opinion of Mr. Young's judgment and good taste, even before his praise of my play, I thought I might as well show it to Elliston. I felt quite certain that Young would not have advised me to take the trouble of getting it copied, if it had not been his real, decided opinion, that it was fit for the stage; so I wrote as follows to Mr. Elliston, whom I then believed to be a gentlemanly, pleasant, odd, fellow:

My Good Mountebank,

You, who were born and created for my particular sport and amusement, pray come and see me on Sunday evening, at seven o'clock, if you have time. I want to give you a little dramatic piece to look over, at your leisure, and I want, at the same time, to shake hands with you.

Yours truly,

H. W.

Elliston sent me this answer, on Sunday morning.

My Dear Madam,

The probable prevention to the pleasure I proposed to myself, in passing an hour in your company, was removed; but I am laid by the heels with a sharp fit of the gout, a grievous enemy to Sunday evening meetings. I do not know whether you think this is a feather in my cap; but I would well wish that the feather had been fixed on the foot, that, like Mercury, I might have escaped from my confinement. If I chose to pursue the image, I might add, my visit, like his, would have been to a goddess.

I am glad you think I was born to please you—No, to amuse was the phrase, and, as Benedict says, there is a double meaning in that.

It appears pretty evident, madam, that I must not play the fool, in private, with you. God send me a good deliverance! I have been out with my crutch, my pillow, and my large shoe, in the carriage to-day: a seducing set of paraphernalia for un beau garcon. *There are, however, goodly reasons why I should think that Tuesday, or Wednesday, will see me quite myself, which, you will say, is promising but little. I promise nothing, but leave all to time, which, greybeards say, bringeth everything to light.*

MOUNTEBANK.

In about another week, I wrote to him again, as follows:

Why don't you come, Mountebank?

Many thanks for the private box you were kind enough to send me an order for, last night. Your Jew was a masterpiece of fine, chaste acting, nothing overdone—no grimace!—the true, benevolent simplicity of the good old Jew, real and genuine. Tell me, by bearer, when you will come, for I am like the lady in Tom Thumb—I cannot stay.

Yours truly and obediently,

H. W.

Elliston sent me word, he would be with me by eight in the evening, at which hour, finding himself, as usual, very tipsy, he dispatched this note, by his servant:

MY DEAREST MADAM,

Say not you, in return, oh false promiser! Well, if I must bear blame, at least I will be heard. The day has been unruly, and the difficulty of procuring a coach, very great: besides, when I come to you, let me be allowed the Da Capo of your own sweet words, I cannot stay. Now, if I dared to suppose that disappointment had soured you, I would, with soothing words, disarm you, and try to dissipate the frown from your brow.

What is the matter between you and Livius?

I am not conscious of having done any harm. In all my transactions with that gentleman, it has been my most anxious desire to show him attention, and to do him justice; and, I sincerely assure you, that I have run his musical comedy, as a first piece, beyond discretion.

If it is a fine morning on Sunday, I may walk up to your house early. In short, as you say that I am an odd creature, think me so still, and always believe that my heart is right, though my head may be wrong; so I will call upon you when I can, and, what is more, when I like. Hurrah for impudence! ! !

ANDREW MERRY.

There is enough of Elliston. I sent him my farce, which he acknowledged in a letter, now in my possession, where he promises to take an early opportunity of reading it. Since that, we have quarrelled, and I have vainly asked him to return me my farce, or pay me for it. Elliston has never had the honesty to do the one or the other.

When I returned from Leicestershire, Colonel Parker was arrived from Spain, and Worcester hourly expected with dispatches. My father proposed separating himself from my mother, and retiring to his native country, the Canton de Berne, should the expected peace be proclaimed; and he, as well as Lord Berwick, wished my mother to reside with the younger part of her family, in France.

Lord Worcester, when he brought over the dispatches shortly afterwards, appeared, from what my sister Fanny, whom he often visited, told me, to have taken rather a dislike to me, or he was trying to do so, and he strove hard to muster up another passion, for another woman. The only flattering part of this melancholy fact was, that every woman he made up to, had been reckoned like me in features or expression. He made a dead set at a French woman who was a sort of caricature of me, and the poor lady fell in love with the gay Marquis in earnest. She was very thin and bony, as Worcester told Fanny, and all the first night of their honeymoon, she caressed, and caressed, and caressed, saying, *ah que je t'aime! que je t'aime!* and yet nothing would do; he could not manage to prove his gratitude in the way the lady wished and naturally expected.

"It is, no doubt, owing to the great fatigue I have experienced, in bringing over dispatches," said Worcester; "but

to-morrow night, I shall make a satisfactory return for your kind and affectionate devotedness."

However, the second night came, and passed away, without the lady having been gratified by, even, one of the promised proofs. The third morning sun shone on no more brilliant scenes of martial prowess; and, on the fourth night, madame felt such irrepressible disgust, that she kicked the triumphant dispatch-bearer of the bungling Wellington out of bed:

And made the fair,
In wrath declare,
The Aide-de-Camp a fumbler.

The noble Marquis next made up to the late Miss Georgiana Fitzroy, who, as I have heard many people say, very closely resembled me. He danced with her and ogled her for a fortnight, and then he was obliged to return to his military duties in Spain. However, he first went, accompanied by the present Lord Glengall, to take a hasty leave of his new flame. Lord Glengall, who waited in an adjoining room, declared, as Amy says, that he heard Miss Fitzroy sobbing in hysterics! and I have some reason to believe that Lord Worcester could only soothe her by promises of marriage.

When this account was mentioned to the Duke of Leinster, His Grace asserted that Miss Fitzroy had tried hysterics with him, as a bold stroke for a husband of high rank; but that, though not wise, he was not quite so easily caught, neither, as all that came to!

While Lord Worcester was in town, Fanny had permitted him to visit her, for the sole purpose of endeavouring to make him do something for me; but Lord Worcester seemed to have lost every atom of feeling in the wars, and from a shy, sensitive, blushing, ardent boy, had returned a coldblooded and most shameless profligate, like the great, the glorious wonder of his age, Wellington!

France being now open to us, Meyler expressed his intention of taking a trip to Paris. We had some very serious quarrels, just at that time.

"Meyler," said I to him, a short time before we went abroad, "you and I cannot live together. You are honest enough to acknowledge that your temper is abominable; for my part, I do not believe that there exists a woman who could endure it. I hold myself no longer, therefore, under your protection, mind. I don't mean to say that I will be unfaithful to you: but from this hour I am my own mistress, and you, when we meet any visitors, are to be turned out, the first moment you treat me with a want of politeness." Meyler could not bear this plan for any length of time, and we had, in one month, mutually agreed to part at least twenty times over, and then made matters up again. The deuce was in us both. We really hated each other, and yet sheer jealousy kept us together. At last Meyler assured me that, though he had often talked of parting, he had never been so determined till now; and to effect this object, and prevent the possibility of our reconciliation, like fools, only to quarrel again the next instant, he should leave town, and not return until we were both attached and engaged elsewhere.

This resolution made me, I do confess, very unhappy. To conceal my real feelings, I dressed gaily, I went blazing to the opera, and to every other place of resort where I might expect to meet Meyler's friends, one of whom told me that Meyler was actually staying at Melton, quite alone, the hunting season being at an end. In about three weeks, he came to town. I dreaded encountering him at the opera, since we were to cut each other dead, and yet the effort must be made. He shall see me merry, and surrounded with handsome admirers, if I am to die the next hour. The little, provokingly handsome sugar-baker must not know that I still remember him, and am dying for his kiss.

For several opera nights I saw Meyler, in the Duchess of Beaufort's box and in the round room, and we mutually cut each other. At last he came slyly up to our party, and addressed my sister Fanny. His beautiful, white, *petite* hand was held towards mine, and I pressed it, *malgrè moi*, for an instant, without speaking to him, and, the next moment, found myself seated in his carriage, on our way home.

"Don't tell my friends," said Meyler. "I have so sworn never to speak to you again that I shall not be able to support their incessant quizzing."

"We shall never again attempt to live with each other," said I. "Our tempers never can assimilate, and I will be as free as the air we breathe; but you may, indeed you must, come and visit me."

"Swear then, upon your honour and soul, that you will acquaint me, if you should prove unfaithful to me."

I did swear not to deceive him: and then we hoped to go on more comfortably under our new arrangement.

"I shall go to Paris in my own carriage, and establish myself in my own lodgings," said I; and to this proposition Meyler was obliged to agree. He promised to follow me, and be there a week after my arrival.

My dear mother had disposed of her house at Brompton, very unwillingly, in compliance with the wishes of Lord Berwick and her husband. Her departure, as well as mine, was delayed by a circumstance which I will now relate.

Colonel Parker, being one of those sort of animals whose constitution requires variety, had been, of late, cooling towards Fanny, his most amiable, and I will swear, most faithful companion, the mother of his child, too, and merely because he had been in possession of her person too many months for his habit of variety. Having left her one morning, to pay a visit to a relation of his, where he was to meet his cousin, Fanny asked him, in joke, if he was certain he should not make love to her?

"Love to her!" exclaimed Parker, "she is the greatest fright imaginable. I wish you could once see her. It would set your mind at rest for the remainder of your life, on that head at least." The lady's name was Popham, if I recollect right.

As Parker promised to return to Fanny in a week, she grew uneasy when almost a fortnight had elapsed without seeing or even hearing from him. At last somebody told her that he was in town, and residing at an hotel in Vere Street. Fanny set off

that very instant, by herself, and on foot, to the hotel, declaring her conviction of its utter impossibility. She was, however, dreadfully agitated, *quand même*. She met Parker on the steps of the hotel, and placed her hand upon his arm, absolutely breathless and speechless.

"Fanny," said Parker, "you are, no doubt, surprised that I did not either go to you, or inform you of my arrival in town." Fanny looked earnestly in his face—"but"—continued Parker —and he hesitated.

"Pray, speak," said Fanny, and she pressed both her hands on her left side. She had, of late, often complained that she felt pain there; but at that moment it was agonizing, and seemed almost to produce suffocation, which might have been seen by the purple tint of her quivering lips.

"I have bad news for you," said Parker, rather confused than agitated. "I am going to be married," he continued, observing that Fanny could not speak.

At these words, Fanny's whole countenance underwent such a violent change that Parker was terrified, and, calling a hackney-coach, they stepped into it, and came home together, while I was sitting with Julia, at whose house Fanny still resided.

The little sitting-room, which Fanny had furnished and fitted up for herself, was a back parlour, looking into a garden. Her veil was down, when she descended from the coach, and, though we expected they would have come upstairs, Julia and I determined not to interrupt them. I was to pass the day with Julia: and, when the dinner was on the table, the servant was desired to knock at Fanny's door, and inform Colonel and Mrs. Parker, that we were waiting. The servant brought us word that they must beg to be excused. I became uneasy, and, without knocking, or any further ceremony, entered the room. Fanny was sitting on the sofa, with her head reclined on the pillow. She was not in tears, and did not appear to have been shedding any; but her face, ears, and throat were visibly swollen, and her whole appearance so changed that I was frightened.

"My dear Fanny, what is the matter?"

Fanny did not even lift her eyes from their fixed gaze on the earth.

"Colonel Parker," said I, "for God's sake, tell me what has happened."

"She heard some unpleasant news, too abruptly," said Colonel Parker.

"I implore you not to inquire," said Fanny, speaking with evident difficulty. "I would not be left alone, this night, and I have been on my knees, to intreat Parker to remain with me. He refuses."

"Surely you do not mean to leave her, in this state!" said I, addressing Parker.

"I can do her no good. It is all too late: since my word is passed, and, in ten days, I shall be the husband of another. My presence only irritates her, and does her harm."

"Fanny, my dear Fanny," said I, "can you make yourself so completely wretched, for a man who acts without common humanity towards you?"

"Pray, pray, never expect to console me, in this way," said Fanny impatiently. "I derive no consolation from thinking ill of the father of my dear child."

"Come to bed, dear Fanny," said I, taking hold of her burning hand.

"Yes, I shall be better in bed."

We assisted her upstairs. She seemed stupefied, and could neither speak nor shed tears. At about one, Parker left her.

Fanny kept her bed for two days, and on the third she thought herself much better.

"All I entreat of you, is to keep secret from me the day of their marriage, and everything connected with it," said Fanny.

We promised to do our best to prevent her hearing a word more on the hateful subject.

Fanny changed the conversation immediately, and forced herself to go into society as usual; but her lips now assumed a blueish tint, whenever she made the slightest exertion, or hurried upstairs, or walked fast, and she would put her hand on her left

side, and say, "there is something very wrong, and odd, about my heart: of that I am certain; and so, as it may be of use to others, perhaps to some of my sisters, I hope that, when I am dead, you will have my body examined."

There was a man, a brute, I should rather say, whose passion she had good-naturedly laughed at, who actually brought her a piece of Parker's wedding-cake, and informed her of the day, and hour, on which they were married. Fanny almost went on her knees, to implore us not to enter her bedroom, for the whole of the next day. After that, she appeared nearly the same as usual, except that she coughed rather more, and began to discover that a single glass of wine always produced fever; but she looked as fresh and lovely as ever. Her character, however, was completely changed, from gay to serious, and she was always occupied in writing or reading.

When I went to France, Fanny's mind had been much relieved by some kind letters from Parker, assuring her that he would, on his return to town, always visit her and his child. He even led her to believe that his marriage had been merely a convenient one, in order to obtain promotion in the army, and that his heart had never changed.

Fanny talked soon of joining me in Paris. Meyler, with whom I had not once quarrelled since I had received him only as a visitor, promised to follow me in a week. As to Julia, she could not leave her dear, long-backed Mr. Napier for a single day. Ladies on the wrong side of forty become so very tender!

Lord Frederic Bentinck drove me, in his tilbury, the two first stages on my road to Dover, and then, after a world of good advice, and many questions as to where I expected to go after I was dead, he took his leave, and I continued my journey towards Paris, accompanied by my *femme de chambre* and my young provoking nephew, George Woodcock.

We were, all three, so weary when we reached Paris, that, having hired some handsome rooms in the Rue de la Paix, we kept our beds for about two days and a half. On the third day, we went out to look about us, and were much struck and pleased

with the Place Vendôme, and many more places which have been sufficiently described by others; but what astonished me most, was seeing the public walks and gardens filled with statues, which had no broken noses, and full blown roses which nobody meddled with. John Bull then must be a very mischievous fellow! said I to myself; or, what is worse, he has no respect for the fine arts.

En attendant Monsieur Meyler, my landlord was kind enough to show me a few of the Paris Lions. We went to the Palais Royale, where I saw more fine women than were to be met with in any other part of Paris. We visited the Louvre, and there I saw many fine statues; but I have forgotten all about every one of them, except the Apollo Belvidere, and that I shall remember for ever: not for its beauty; but for the appearance of life, fire, and animation, which never can be described, nor imagined, by anybody who has not seen it. The quivering lips—the throat! Surely there was life, and pulsation about that statue! It is said that a fair lady once sat by the Apollo, whom she could not warm, till she went raving mad, and in that state died. I really think that, if they had not come to divert my attention, I should have been in danger of following her example.

"We are free as air, you know, my dear," said Meyler, on the very first night of his arrival, in Paris. "I have been most true to you for more than two years, nor am I tired of you now, in the least; but never having had an intrigue with a French woman, and being here, for the first time, of course I must try them, merely for fun, and to have something to talk about. You know, a young man with thirty thousand a year must try everything, once in his life; but I shall love you the better afterwards."

"A delightful plan," said I, striving, with all the power of my mind, to conceal my rage and jealousy, "provided it be mutually followed up, and I can conceive nothing more agreeable than our meeting about once a week or so, and passing a day together, for the sole purpose of hearing each other's adventures."

"Oh, nonsense! mere threats," said Meyler. "I don't believe you will ever be inconstant. You are, in fact, too

constant for Paris. One has enough of all that hum-drum stuff, in England. I am sure I have had enough of it, for the last two years, and begin to wish there was no such thing as constancy in this dirty world."

I could have almost murdered Meyler for this insulting speech; but that pride made me force myself to seem of his way of thinking.

"Where are you staying?" I inquired, with affected carelessness.

"At the Hotel de Hollande, exactly opposite your own door," he replied.

"Never mind," said I, "I shall not have time to watch you."

"What are you going to do this evening?" Meyler inquired, growing uneasy, and more in love, as he began to believe in my indifference.

"Oh, I have made a charming new acquaintance already. An Italian lady, who resides in this Hotel, has invited me to dine with her," said I.

"Will you present me?" Meyler inquired.

"Why no, that would be too cool a thing to do, till I know her better."

"To-morrow morning then, I suppose, you are to be found, in case I should not be otherwise engaged, at about two."

"Why no, not so, for my carriage is ordered at ten in the morning, and I shall be out the whole of the day, with a French party, seeing sights."

"Where shall I see you, then?" said Meyler, vexed, fidgetty, and almost forgetting his project of making up to French women, since the chief enjoyment and zest of such a pursuit was expected to arise out of my jealousy.

"Why, really, Meyler, this plan of as free as air, which you know you proposed, is so decidedly to my taste that I cannot sufficiently express to you my obligation. I begin to wish, with you, that there was no such thing as constancy in the world, particularly when I recollect how very Darby and Joan-like we lived together in London; but I dare say we shall meet at the

opera, towards midnight, and if we don't, never mind, love," said I, kissing my hand to him, as I went towards the door.

"Where are you going, then?" asked Meyler.

"To a party, in the Hotel, to whom my Italian friend presented me yesterday. *Au revoir, mon voisin,*" said I, and then called Monsieur François, my new *lacquais de place*, to conduct me where I was to pass the evening.

I had acted my part well, and satisfied my pride, but not my heart. No matter. It won't do to play the game of hearts in Paris, and, wherever we may be, we must take the world as we find it.

At this French party, I expected that the men would be tumbling over each other in their too great zeal to show me their national politeness. Quite the contrary, the young Frenchmen were as indifferent as even Brummell himself, to every woman turned of twenty; but the old high-bred, high-born Frenchmen were all remarkably intelligent, polite and agreeable. There was present among the company a French naval officer, who had passed two months of his life in London, and would insist on boring me with his bad English.

"It may be all vare fine, fore to go to Inglant, fore vat I do know; but, fore my part, in de short time I vas dare I had not de goot fortune to fine out de fine at all. Vare is de most fine pictures? I ask—and dey tell me to go to Somaresetous, and to Pell Mell, vat you call. I go, an dey make me pay fore von book, vish I read. Von vare fine orishinal of dis, von fine copee of dat, an dis ting, an oter ting, and I den vos pay agen: an ven I go in, dese ting are all *exécrable!* Ven at de Louvre I pay noting, to see avari ting vat is good.

" 'Vot is next?' I ask. 'De Tower day say vare fine indeed. *Oui*, certainly. I do remembare everybody do tell to me, in France, de Tower is de most fine of all de spectacle in London. But den I most pay for dese sight too. It is no dis vay in Paris, I say; but *n'importe:* it is mean of de na-ti-on to make pay for everyting von can see: but never mind; and I do pay. Vot do dey show to me fore all dis money? . . . Muskets! I don't vont

fore to see de muskets! Vot for should any man vont fore to see great many muskets, all put straight togeter fore to do noting? My Inglese frend tell to me afterwards dat Inglant is most *célèbre* fore her agriculture! I haf de great disposition fore dat science myself, I *réponds*. Vel den, de Ingleeshman tell to me, I shall gif you von lettare of introduction to de *chef* of de Agricultural *Société*, who leef near Carmarthen en Vales. Oh my goot leetil man, I say. But it is so long vay off my frent tell to me. Never mind, I tell to him, I com to Inglant fore to see all, and I love de most of all dis science, vich is so *parfait*, I do know, in your contree. Vel, so I gif de lettare, an I take my place in de mail coche. Ah! for example! vare nice horse and travail indeet; bote it rain all de vay, an I vos two nights on my voyage. At last, I arrive and pracent my lettare.

"'Vot you tink vos in this man's garten?

"Noting, I gif you my honour, boate some cabage and some myrtle, and great mosh tornep tops, and soam leettil pot of de sweet pea.

" 'Vot den for Got, devil he send me here to learn agriculture?' I ask.

"An dis man say stop a minute, an aftare he take me to a *société*, vare von old man make vare large discours for rule of agriculture, in de Velsh langage, vich vos, I vos assure, de most fine langage in de vorlt fore de expression. *Ma foi!* An I am *retour* agen to *Londres*. I take my *logement* in your best quartare, vare, I vos tel, is all de *beau monde*, bote, *certainement*, I cannot see mush vare particulare *beauté* in vot ees call de *beaux jardins* of Laistare Square."

I did not see Meyler again till the following evening at the opera, when, being both tired of shamming more indifference than we really felt, we went home together. Meyler was looking remarkably handsome and well. He told me that Lord Ebrington was in Paris, and had promised to present him at court the next day.

"What do you think of His Lordship?" I inquired.

"He is one of the handsomest, most sensible, and distin-

guished looking young noblemen in Europe," Meyler replied.

"Very well, I am glad you like him, and I am glad he is here; because, if you treat me too ill, or again mortify me by saying you are sick of my constancy, and wish nobody was constant in the world, *alors*, *vois-tu*, *on peut se consoler*."

"*Point de tout*," answered Meyler, "for, of course, if Lord Ebrington had any fancy for you he would prove it. I am not such a vain fool as to believe any woman breathing would have me, or remain an hour with me, if she could be even tolerated by Lord Ebrington."

"Now Meyler, pray don't go out of your way to provoke me. You cannot, nobody can, or ever did imagine I would stay with a man whom I disliked, merely for his money: and further, what pleasure do you find in striving to wound and humble my vanity thus, as if I was and had been constant to you from necessity alone?"

"I did not say you could not get others. I know to the contrary. I only said what I firmly believe, which is that, were you, this very night, to send a note to Lord Ebrington, inviting him to your bed even, he would not come."

Thus did this provoking creature delight in teasing me, and the next half-hour he would seem passionately devoted to me.

For the first month, Meyler went everywhere, and I led a very gay life: that is, with regard to going every night to parties, masquerades, balls, and other amusements. One day, a friend of Meyler's, Bradshaw, told me that Meyler led a most dissipated life, and made up to at least half a dozen Frenchwomen in a week. The idea had not struck me with such force of truth before, and I was suddenly oppressed with very low spirits; so writing an excuse to the party where I was expected to sup, I sat down at my window to watch the door of Meyler's hotel, which was opposite to mine, for the arrival of his well-known little elegant chariot. The moment it caught my eye, I despatched my servant with a note begging him to come over to me immediately. He obeyed my summons in very ill humour, declaring that I made him feel as though he had a net thrown over him,

and that it was impossible to be happy without perfect liberty. This harshness to one like me, who had been hitherto so spoiled and indulged, affected me with the deepest melancholy. I felt it the more too from being in a foreign country. Meyler had wounded my pride in a way I should have resented at another moment; but I was in Paris alone, my mother and her family not having yet joined me. Meyler was my only friend, and, but for Meyler, I might probably have been now married to Worcester, whose tender care of me and devoted attentions could scarcely be understood or described.

"Meyler," said I, almost in tears, "I wish all the world to enjoy perfect liberty, and you must admit that, generally speaking, it has been my request that you only remain with me while my society is pleasant to you; but this night I am unwell, and my spirits are greatly depressed by what Mr. Bradshaw has told me. You know I am not a likely person to wear the willow, or be long unhappy, if you have ceased to prefer me to all other women; but, this night I would entreat and consider it as a favour, if you would remain with me for an hour.'

"Can't you enter into the secret of my temper?" said this most provoking little man in his usual impressive, slow way. "Can't you understand that, were you to make it your particular request that I should sit down on that chair at the very moment when I was about to do so, it would be the very reason why I should determine against it?"

"Common delicacy, such as is due to yourself as a gentleman," I continued, "might induce you not to wound my pride, or insult me by leaving me, at the moment when I have every reason to believe it is for the purpose of visiting another woman; one, too, of that class which is even unsought by any Englishman who may fall in their way. This has been told me by your friend; but if you will give me your honour that such is not the case I will believe you."

"You are not my father confessor," answered Meyler roughly, and then ran downstairs, got into his carriage, and drove off without farther ceremony.

If I had bowed in meek submission to Meyler's will, and endured all this unfeeling, insulting treatment in humble silence, wetting my solitary pillow with my tears, perhaps some might have voted me a saint, from which opinion I take the liberty to differ. We must, as I think, treat those capricious men as we find them. Meyler's affections were not to be so preserved, even if it had not been contrary to my nature and my spirit to submit to undeserved insult without offering *la parcille*. Had I been a wife or a mother, I might have thought differently; as it was, anger now took the place of tenderness. I dried up my tears, settled my disordered curls by the glass, and, being fixed as a rock in my determination to leave Meyler at once and immediately, I was undecided as to my choice of doing so. I wanted to convince him of my perfect contempt and indifference. I should have preferred being pointed at by the whole world, as one of the most profligate women breathing, rather than that anyone should imagine me capable of wearing the willow for a mere sugar-baker, who could forsake me and openly seek the society of the lowest women in preference to mine.

At this moment, choosing whom I might prefer myself as an instrument to execute my proposed vengeance, was quite secondary consideration. I thought only on the person who might be most likely to inspire Meyler with jealous rage and envy. Such is poor human nature; and I have said before that I am but a mere woman, with at least as many imperfections on my head as women usually have to answer for. I allude only to handsome women, who have been as much tempted as I have.

I very soon decided upon Lord Ebrington, as being the man Meyler professed to think most desirable, and, at the same time, whose attention he conceived it would be most difficult for me to obtain, and I wrote as follows:

My Dear Lord Ebrington,

You and I made each other's acquaintance when I was very young, and soon parted. By mutual consent we cut each other's acquaintance. Yesterday I saw you looking remarkably well.

You were in Meyler's barouche. You have sense enough to love candour, and, when women mean the same thing, you have the same respect for them, whether they go a roundabout way to work, or straightforward. In a word then, I am willing to renew our acquaintance, believing it just possible that, if you were tired of me long ago, when I was quite a different sort of person, you may like me now; while, at the same time, I may be less afraid of you than I was formerly. Qu'en pensez vous?

H. W.

Answer:

Will ten o'clock this evening suit you? If so, I shall have much pleasure in visiting you.

E.

Revenge is sometimes sweet, even to the most forgiving lady, when the manner of it is not too desperate. Ebrington came. He was then particularly handsome and sensible, and his manners were as gentle, shy, and graceful almost as those of Lord Ponsonby himself. Few women could have disliked a *tête-à-tête* with Lord Ebrington. The thing was scarcely possible, supposing he had been in the humour to make them like it. The fact is I gloried in being a match for Meyler's vile impertinence. Naturally frank, I did not conceal the real state of things from Ebrington. I paid his vanity a wretched compliment, he said; but still he should have been proud to have accepted my invitation under any circumstances.

Ebrington was not a new lover. I had known him long before I ever saw Meyler; but he was proud, and reserved, and shy, and he had not taken the trouble to draw me out, or discover that I professed any more quickness than girls in general. I always thought the expression of his countenance remarkably fine, and now that we conversed more freely, and I had an opportunity of judging of his very agreeable qualities from his lively pleasant conversation, it was impossible to avoid drawing comparisons by no means favourable to Meyler, who, though perfectly graceful and gentlemanlike, was far from well read, and, as for conversation, he seldom spoke at all. Moreover, at

this instant, I had good reason to believe the provoking little reptile was actually in the arms of some frail, very frail, French woman.

I asked Ebrington, while we were taking our chocolate the next morning, in my very gay, luxurious dressing-room, how he came to be so cold a lover at a time when I was certainly handsomer and in the very first bloom of my youth?

"I cannot account for it," answered Ebrington; "but, since you love candour, I will tell you that you did not then inspire me with any warmer sentiment that such general admiration as one cannot help feeling towards any fine girl. We met by accident, and soon parted, I believe without much regret on either side."

"*Quant a moi, je vous en réponds, mon ami*," said I, determined not to be behind on the score of indifference.

"Since that," continued Ebrington, "I have heard of nothing but Harriette Wilson wherever I went. I could not help wondering what Ponsonby or Worcester had discovered in you that was so very charming, and yet could so entirely have escaped my observation."

"You vile, impertinent monster!" interrupted I.

"Never mind, dear Harry," continued Ebrington, "for I love you dearly now."

"And I like you twice as well as I did six or seven years ago," I retorted.

"Very complimentary to us both," said Ebrington. "In fact, you are now exactly what I always liked. Formerly, you were too shy for my taste. I would have given anything that you had sent for me merely because you fancied me. Nothing can be so gratifying and delightful to my feelings, as the idea of having inspired a fine woman with a strong, irresistible desire to make me her lover, whenever the desire is not a general one.

"I remember having once made the acquaintance of a woman who was greatly to my taste, and who, as I almost fancied, was disposed to favour me in return. After much difficulty I obtained her consent to indulge me with a private meeting, and

she agreed to come into my chariot, in which I took her up at the end of a retired lane at the back of her father's house. She was a young widow. We were scarcely seated, when her very natural, frank, and flattering exclamation of 'Oh how very happy I am, to find myself at last here alone with you', produced such a pleasant effect on me that I have never forgotten it."

Ebrington did not leave me till past two o'clock in the day, having obtained my permission to return to me early on the same evening. About half an hour after his departure Meyler entered my room, and, as was invariably the case after he had used me harshly, was all smiles and tenderness. "My dearest Harriette," said he, "I confess Bradshaw told you the truth. I have been intriguing, since I came to Paris, with almost every Frenchwoman I could find. *Que voulez-vous?* It is the nature of the animal. I am not naturally sentimental. Frenchwomen, being a great novelty to me, inspired me for the moment; but I could never visit any one of them a second time. So much the contrary, that I ran away from anyone I had once visited, when I met them in the streets, with feelings of the strongest disgust. Last night has cured me of intriguing with Frenchwomen. I returned home more in love with you, dearest Harriette, than ever. In short, I was dying to see you, to kiss you, and ask your forgiveness on my knees: but it was too late, your house was shut up, and I dared not disturb you."

"You will never disturb me again," answered I, very quietly.

"What do you mean

"I have seen Lord Ebrington."

"What! When we passed your house in my barouche."

"I am not so platonic as to have been satisfied with that. No, I sent for him: but you know, you affirmed that I might do this with safety, since you were sure he would not obey my summons. *Qu'en pensez-vous actuellement?*"

"Pray," said Meyler, trembling from head to foot, "put me out of suspense."

"*Je ne demande pas mieux, je t'en réponds*," answered I,

"only," and I looked at him as I advanced towards the door for safety, "only promise not to beat me nor break my head."

"Nonsense! Pray, pray don't torment me."

"Why not? You felt no remorse in vexing me, last night."

"Yes, indeed I did, after I had left you."

"And of what service was that to me, think you? However, I never wished to deceive you nor any man. Briefly then, I beg to inform you that I sympathise with you in your love of variety, and you will, I am sure, give me credit for excellent taste, when I inform you that I have made a transfer of my affections from you to Lord Ebrington, who passed the night here, *et qui doit faire autant ce soir*."

I expected abuse; but, at all events, something like coldness of manner from Meyler. *Oh! que les hommes sont bizarres*. Quite the contrary. Meyler's spirits sunk into despondency: he actually shed tears, which, with him, was a very unusual event. He was now at my feet, the humble sighing, adoring, suppliant lover again.

"You have a good heart, Harriette," said he, "and, whatever my faults may have been, I am now sufficiently punished. My health, as you know, has been seriously affected lately. I therefore implore you to send away Lord Ebrington and give me one more trial. I will be as constant and as attentive to you as you can possibly wish."

The little interesting sugar-baker looked very pale; but always very handsome. I say little, from the mere habit I had acquired, with more of his friends, of calling him little Meyler; for his person was very well proportioned, and altogether of the full middle size; but then the expression of his features possessed that soft style of beauty which would have been suitable to a woman.

To proceed, Meyler remained with me without his dinner till past eight o'clock. He would not eat, and could not leave me. At nine, I expected Lord Ebrington, who believed me watching for him with tender anxiety. By this time, fasting and fretting had made poor Meyler seriously unwell. I was not destitute of

humanity towards even the worst of my fellow creatures; but it is not, was not, and never will be in my nature to forget insult, nor to love any man after he has practised open infidelity towards me.

"Meyler," said I to him at last, just as the clock was about to strike the hour of nine, and I was in momentary expectation of seeing Lord Ebrington enter the room, "since you have stayed here so long, and appear really annoyed, I will not turn you out of the room to admit another man."

I then hastily scribbled a few lines of apology to Lord Ebrington and handed it to my woman, requesting her to carry the letter down to the porter's lodge to be delivered to His Lordship as soon as he should enter. Meyler was all joy and wild rapture: more in love, perhaps, even, than on the day I first went to him, after he had been pining for one whole year and a quarter. For my part, the idea that so many of the lowest women had lately been favoured with his smiles entirely prevented my sympathising in his feeling. Ebrington seemed at least to respect and love me. He was handsome, accomplished, of high birth, and not quite turned of thirty.

I was already beginning to prefer His Lordship, and was it to be wondered at, all the circumstances considered? Meyler wanted me to promise never to see nor speak to Ebrington again; but, as it was contrary to my taste and principles to leave any man I had once favoured, as long as he gave me no cause to complain of him, I told Meyler he had better waive the subject, for I would positively make no promise, one way or the other. With this answer he was obliged to be content.

CHAPTER XXII

The next morning Lord Ebrington called on me in his cabriolet. Meyler, who had just left me, was watching my house from his own window opposite.

Meyler was man of the world enough to subdue his feelings so far as to treat Ebrington with something like civility. Not that he feared fighting; ridicule alone was the bugbear which made him smother his rising anger till he had quite subdued it. My two beaux seemed bent on sitting each other out; the difficulty was to hit upon subjects for conversation. We had gone over that lame one, the weather, at least three times, and the dirty streets of Paris, the French cookery, etc. Ebrington now tried Bonaparte, then pictures, next statues: but Meyler knew no more about them all than the man in the moon, even if he had been disposed to converse, which was seldom the case at any time. At last, luckily for me, they both recollected that they were invited to a large dinner with some of the French royal family, and had only just time to dress. Meyler called me aside to entreat that I would receive him after dinner. I refused. Meyler was in a passion. I declared we must part, since those Frenchwomen had for ever spoiled the pleasure I used to feel in his society.

"Then I'll cut the dinner, and stay here all my life," said Meyler, quietly seating himself.

"We shall be too late, Meyler," called out Ebrington from the drawing-room.

Dreading some difference between these two gentlemen, I at length promised to receive Meyler in the evening, since that appeared to be my only chance of getting rid of him. I had this

day invited a new and very pleasing female acquaintance to dine with me. She was an Italian widow, of exactly my own age, with the true, soft, Italian expression of countenance. A native of Naples, she had accompanied her son to Paris for the purpose of placing him in a celebrated college. He was a delicate, bilious-looking, interesting child of eleven years of age, with large, pensive black eyes, and thick black fringes to them. He wore, in common with all the youths of that institution, a large cocked hat, with a tight, military blue coat, faced with a lighter shade of the same colour. His appearance formed an odd contrast to that of my young nephew, George Woodcock, whom I had brought to Paris with me. George was a fair, fresh-coloured, remarkably strong, active boy, with white, thick, curly hair, dressed in a light blue jacket and trousers, with a small ruff round his throat. He did not know one single word of French: nay, more, was such a complete John Bull as to declare upon his word and honour that he would take all the care he possibly could not to learn it. All he feared and dreaded was that the vile jargon should come to him by itself, in spite of all he could do to prevent it.

My Italian friend, whose Christian name was Rosabella, inhabited the same hotel with me. Her constant visitor was a most sanguine Bonapartist, who had formerly been employed by that Emperor as Ambassador to the Court of Naples. I forget this man's name; but I remember he treated Rosabella with the affectionate kindness of a father. His manners were very refined; but so excessively formal and ceremonious that he used to put me into a fever. If he came up to a carriage during a heavy fall of rain, nothing we could say would induce him to put on his hat, and as to putting on his greatcoat in a room where I happened to be sitting, even at Rosabella's own house, he could not endure such an idea.

Rosabella was naturally as frank as myself. In our second or third interview, she informed me that she had married at the age of thirteen, by her parents' commands, an old Frenchman whom she hated, and who might, in point of years, have been

her grandfather; that her disgust and dislike towards her better half was at its height when she was accidentally thrown into the society of Monsieur l'Ambassadeur, who, in the course of due time—in one, two or three years, I forget which—had completely won her heart, and the result and pledge of their love was her only son, the young Carlo, who, having been presented in form to young George Woodcock, was no doubt remarkably communicative, seeing that he knew but little French, which language he spoke with a strong Italian accent, while George Woodcock vowed and declared he would sooner do anything than understand one word of their vile lingo.

Carlo was a prodigy of learning for his age. No expense, which could be imagined by fond parents as likely to forward or facilitate his studies, was spared or ever neglected. He had a private tutor kept for him at the college, and whom Rosabella would constantly invite to her table. All her hopes on earth were centred in her child, who slept on a bed of down and drank only of the most delicate wines. He was already a good poet, and rhymed in four different languages; but the poor child appeared to me to be actually dying a victim to severe study, combined with want of exercise. His mother indeed took him home every Saturday night, and he remained with her till the following Monday; but she made him draw plans by way of recreation, with his tutor, almost the whole of the day.

At the time we became acquainted, poor Carlo was afflicted with an oppression on the chest, attended with a cough, and Rosabella, having remarked the bright bloom on George's cheeks, snatched her poor little, interesting skeleton of a child to her heart, and half smothered him with the ardour of her kisses, and then burst into tears. I endeavoured to console her with the assurance I felt, that Carlo only required air and relaxation in order to recover his health.

"He shall have a week's holiday," said poor Rosabella, "and play with your nephew all day long, merely to try its effect."

I interpreted what she said to my nephew, who immediately seized hold of the delicate Carlo, saying, "Come along with me,

little Boney. There's a castor for you," taking up the child's large cocked hat, which was full half as big as himself, and, pressing it down on his head by main force, "one may see you're a Boney in a minute. Never mind. I won't be such a coward as to leather you till you get stronger, for fear I should kill you; so come with me, my little fellow, and I will teach you to swim and play at cricket."

"*Plaît-t'il?*" said Carlo, raising his large languid eyes to George's face from the pencil he was cutting.

"*Veux-tu jouer avec le petit Anglais, mon enfant?*" inquired Rosabella.

"*Volontiers,*" answered Carlo, throwing aside his pencil and gracefully bowing to George, as he took off the huge military cocked hat, which George had fastened tight on his head by dint of hard thumps on the top of it with his fist.

"Come along," said George, dragging Carlo forward to the spacious courtyard below.

The contrast which these two children of exactly the same age exhibited, both in their characters and persons, was too striking to have been overlooked, even by the most careless observer: for my part, it furnished me with no inconsiderable source of amusement.

Rosabella and I were quietly taking our dessert together immediately after our early dinner, when I was astonished by the reappearance of Meyler.

"What, returned already?" I exclaimed. "Why, I scarcely imagined that you had sat down to table."

"I shall get into a nice scrape," answered Meyler. "Only fancy me, while two of the royal family were present, jumping up actually in the middle of dinner, merely using the words, 'a pain here', and with my hand to my head bolting out of the room?"

"What could induce you to be so very rude?" I inquired.

"Why, Lord Ebrington, who was to have dressed and met me at the door, never made his appearance at dinner; I therefore took it for granted he was coming here instead."

"You will have enough to do," said I, "if you have determined to turn spy on either of our actions, after I have told you that I never shall wish to live with you again. Now that you have thus insulted and publicly neglected me, I must choose of two things, either to hate you and be eternally in a passion with you, or to avoid your society. I know you now, and your tastes and pursuits. Still we may continue on friendly, good terms but all illusion is destroyed."

This growing indifference on my part served to rouse the sluggish disposition of Meyler. He was all attention and, what is still more astonishing, he was now in high spirits.

Competition with a rival was what inspired him with most passion and energy, he said, and nothing on earth made him half so much in love. He loved to feel himself in a fever of doubt and agitation about a woman. It was the only thing which kept him awake, made his blood circulate, and did him good.

Rosabella took her leave soon after the return of Meyler, who was so afraid of Ebrington making his appearance, that he feigned being extremely indisposed, an excuse for inducing me to retire to rest and shut up my doors for the night. The next morning I received the following letter from my sister Fanny:

My Dear Harriette,

My journey to Paris is put off for the present, and our dear mother will arrive without me, accompanied by our brothers, George and Charles, with Jane, Charlotte and Rose. My spirits are not at present equal to any sort of exertion. Parker has inquired often, and kindly, after his child, and has twice been to visit me; but I will not dwell on this melancholy subject. I am writing in Parker's old bedroom. Methinks the bed looks like a tomb. However, reflection is all nonsense. I would fain tell you something in the shape of news, but really, I scarcely ever leave the house. Brummell's sun, they say, is setting, which, you'll answer, was the story long ago; but, since that, I am told Brummell won twenty thousand pounds, that is too now gone, and he is greatly embarrassed. Poor Lord Alvanly they say is just in the same

plight. Napier's passion for Julia continues to increase. I will not call it love or affection, else why does he with his twenty thousand a year suffer her to be so shockingly distressed? On the very day you left England, Julia had an execution in her house and the whole of her furniture was seized. I really thought she would have destroyed herself. I insisted on her going down to Mr. Napier at Melton by that very night's mail, to whom I wrote, earnestly entreating him to receive her with tenderness, such as the wretched state of her mind required. A man of Mr. Napier's sanguine temperament was sure to receive any fine woman with rapture, who came to him at Melton Mowbray, where petticoats are so scarce and so dirty; but, if he had really loved her, he surely would have immediately paid all her debts, which do not amount to a thousand pounds, as well as ordered her upholsterer to new-furnish her house.

Would you believe it? Julia has returned with merely cash or credit enough to procure little elegant necessaries for Napier's dressing-room, and, for the rest, her drawing-room is covered with a piece of green baize, and, in lieu of all her beautiful little knick-knacks and elegant furniture, she has two chairs, an old second-hand sofa, and a scanty, yellow cotton curtain. Her own bed was not seized. It is now the only creditable piece of furniture in the house of Napier's adored mistress, one of the richest commoners in England, who is the father of her infant. I except my own room of course, which has not been disturbed. Amy thinks of going to Paris almost directly. Paget, as Lord of the Treasury, must remain in London, and only pay her flying visits. Nugent and Luttrell are also going. I suppose you know that your prime favourite, Ward, went to the continent with Ebrington, and, I understand, they go on to Italy together: that is to say, if they continue to agree. Ward has been making love to me lately. The other day, he said something to me which I fancied so truly harsh, coarse, and indelicate, that it produced a violent hysterical affection, which I found it impossible to subdue. The remarks I made were certainly, as I conceive, what every female with the least decency or delicacy must have made, en pareil cas.

Ward wanted me to submit to something I conceived improper. When I refused, he said, with much fierceness of manner, such as my present weak state of nerves made me ill able to bear, "D——d affectation." I afterwards repeated every particular of what had occurred to Ward's friend Luttrell, who frankly answered, with his earnest serious face, "It looks bad! 'tis a bad story. 'Twas coarse and brutal! There's no excuse for inhumanity of manner or expression, when applied to a woman!" Nugent tried to excuse him.

"Ward," said Nugent, "is so clever that I respect him. He has a bad temper, I confess: but for this there would be nothing to say against him."

Sophia and Lord Berwick appear to go on in the old humdrum way. Nobody visits them in their opera box, except our brother John. In fact, I believe Lord Berwick will not permit them. Harry De Roos declares Sophia to be most ridiculously jealous of her sister Charlotte's beauty.

"True," said De Roos to me the other day, "true, I fancy I ought to have offered my arm to Her Ladyship one night, instead of to Charlotte; but the latter was really so much handsomer, I could not resist. The next day, I dined with Lord Berwick, and, after dinner, placed myself by the side of her sister Charlotte, with whom I took pleasure in conversing, of course, on common subjects. Your mild sister Sophia fell into a violent rage, and began to blow like a kitchen-maid. I was amused at this, and induced to increase my attention to Charlotte. At length, Sophia's blood boiled over all at once, and, bounding towards me, she said, 'Mr. De Roos, if this is the kind of conduct you mean to observe, we had better see no more of you.'

"I answered very calmly, that Her Ladyship was certainly at liberty to choose her own society, and requested she would permit me to ring for a hackney-coach, since my own carriage was not coming till late. Sophia's footman was a long while gone in search of the coach, during which time I commenced a dead flirtation with Charlotte on purpose to mortify her sister."

I must now conclude, my dear Harriette, whose happiness I

sincerely pray for. Apropos, *I had almost forgotten to tell you of my new conquest of Lord Bective, who is really very humble, civil, and attentive to me. I know you will arraign my taste, when I say I rather like him: but then, you recollect, I always hated handsome men.*

God bless you. I enclose a few lines for my poor boy, George, and beg you to believe in the lasting affection of

Your sister

FANNY.

I had scarcely finished reading my letter when Lord Ebrington called on me.

"You have behaved very ill to me," said His Lordship.

I assured him it was not my fault; that I had frankly assured Meyler that it would no longer suit me to continue on the same terms with him in which we had formerly lived.

"But still you admit him, just as usual," retorted Ebrington.

"Because Meyler is so violent in his temper, and just now, so uneasy in his mind, which, added to his indifferent state of health, is more than I can resist. Meyler will not remain long in France; but while he is here, my heart fails me when I attempt to turn him out of my house, and he must be permitted to visit me; neither will I shock nor disgust him, while he is in this constant and penitent humour, by allowing him to find you so often here."

Ebrington, being very proud, did not show half the disappointment he really felt. I refused to tell His Lordship to which theatre I was going in the evening, lest his visit to our private box should annoy poor Meyler; for I still felt something like affection for him, although I could never speak to him, or think of him, without getting into a passion.

I was agreeably interrupted by a visit from my dear mother, accompanied by my eldest sister, who was, I will not say an old maid, and yet she certainly was not a very young one. They had left my brothers and sisters at their hotel, where they had arrived from England late the night before. My poor mother looked

remarkably well, and I was delighted to have her in the same country with me. She had brought George Woodcock's young sister, little Anney, with her. She was a fine healthy child, of about eight years of age. Lord Ebrington was not presented to them, and took his leave. I insisted on their bringing the whole family to dinner, which they did. In the evening, they retired early. I accompanied Meyler to a private box, which he had engaged for me, at the French Opera House, where we had scarcely been seated half an hour, when Lord Ebrington made his appearance, to the very evident annoyance of Meyler, who looked at me reproachfully, as though he imagined His Lordship was there by my desire. I determined to set him right.

"Does your Lordship always attend the French Opera?" I inquired, and I was answered in the negative, and he frankly assured me that his visit to that theatre was expressly to look for me. I asked him how he could possibly know I was there.

"I have already visited almost all the theatres to-night," answered Ebrington.

Meyler's feelings were for once stronger than even his fear of ridicule, and he bounded out of my box, banging the door loudly after him. Ebrington, instead of taking notice of this, took the opportunity of our being *tête-à-tête*, to press me eagerly to appoint a time for his seeing me again.

"How is it possible," I replied, "even if I wished it, since Meyler will not absent himself an hour from me, unless it is to accompany you somewhere? Meyler is very unhappy at your appearance in his box this evening, which was certainly rather bold of you; and, further, I am sorry, very sorry; for I know not how it is, but you certainly remind me of Lord Ponsonby, in voice, in manner, and in person. Notwithstanding, I positively mean to promise Meyler, this very evening, that, while he continues faithful, and so attentive to me, as he has been for the last few days, he shall not have his feelings and pride wounded by being intruded upon by you."

Lord Ebrington reddened from mortified pride, as he said, with some little affectation of indifference, while taking up his

hat to depart, "*Tu feras ce que tu voudras, ma belle Harriette*," and he bowed himself out of the box.

Little Meyler's very expressive face brightened into a glowing blush, when I made a sign to him that Ebrington was gone; for he had placed himself in an empty box on my left side, where he was watching me in a very melancholy attitude, and whence he immediately joined me.

"Lord Ebrington shall not tease you any more." said I to him. "No matter what my feelings may be, I prefer anything to giving pain to the persons who appear to feel the least regard for me. Now the high and mighty don, my Lord Ebrington, if he does feel for anything or anybody, conceals it so well by dint of sheer pride, that he seems a very statue when he likes; although he certainly likes to be just the reverse of this when one gives him due encouragement. As for you, my little honest sugar-baker, you are not ashamed of shedding tears and acknowledging yourself unhappy about a woman; therefore, I repeat, you shall be annoyed no more. I felt indignant at Lord Ebrington taking the liberty of intruding himself into the private box you had hired for me, and therefore took that opportunity to give him his *congé*."

Meyler seemed very grateful and excessively delighted.

"How did Ebrington like being *congédié?*" he inquired.

"Why, to tell the truth, I don't think he will die of it," I replied.

For another fortnight, during which I had not once heard of Ebrington, everything went on smoothly and charmingly. I could indeed never feel what I had felt for Meyler; but his attentions were received with gratitude, and I fancied that, if it were possible for him to continue in good temper, I could yet make myself tolerably happy with him, as often as I could drive his late low and barefaced intrigues out of my head.

Ebrington, for what I knew, had again forgotten me; therefore, why in the name of common sense should I remember one who, though handsome and talented, proved himself at all times so very heartless?

One day as I was sitting at dinner with Rosabella, a poor Italian introduced himself to her, and had the art to impose himself upon her as a countryman of her own of very high rank, who had returned from the Spanish wars in the greatest possible distress, and had just left his lovely wife, who was of noble blood, entirely unprotected. Rosabella offered her mite at once. I wish I had followed her example; but, instead of this, in my eagerness to contribute more substantially to his relief, I addressed a letter to Lord Fife, whom I had twice met in Paris, requesting him to take compassion on the unfortunate bearer of it, who found himself, after enduring the fatigues of a hard campaign in Spain, deserted in a foreign land, where he was likely to starve, if none of us came forward with at least so much relief as might enable him to return to Naples. The poor wretch came to me on the following morning, with a countenance which appeared the very image of despair.

"*Hélas!*" he exclaimed, "*milord Fife ne m'a rien donné.*"

I then recollected my old *beau* Wellington, who, I knew, was at that time our Ambassador at Paris, although I had not yet met with him: but I did not like to intrude myself on his recollection. However, I strongly advised the poor fellow to explain the real state of his case to His Excellency, and to acquaint me with the result.

"*Hélas!*" reiterated the Italian, again returning, "*je ne suis qu'un malheureux. Milord Villainton ne veut rien faire pour moi, non plus.*"

Vexed and hurt at the idea of having given the poor fellow so much useless trouble, I from my own pocket handed him a five-pound note, and promised my influence with Mr. Henry Brougham, who, with Luttrell and his brother Nugent, had just arrived in Paris. My application to that friendly, kind-hearted man was successful, and the next day I presented a second bank-note for five pounds to my poor *protégé*, who seemed absolutely overcome by excess of gratitude.

Amy, if I recollect right, came to Paris with Nugent and Luttrell: at all events if she was not actually the companion of

those famous inseparables, she must have followed them immediately. I remember all three paying me a visit together, and inviting me to visit them in the Rue Mont Blanc.

"What then, do you all live together?" I inquired.

"We have each separate apartments, in the same hotel," they replied, and I agreed to call on them.

As for Meyler, he continued to be all a woman could possibly wish him, as long as there was rivalry with Lord Ebrington; but, as soon as ever His Lordship had, or seemed to have, relinquished the pursuit, Meyler left off being amiable by slow degrees, till he became just what he had been before Ebrington had made an infraction in the complete harmony of our *ménage*. At that time Lord Hertford's remark occurred to me: "Better live on a bone, than with a man of uneven or bad temper."

In one of Meyler's fits of dogged humour, he asked me if I imagined he was vain enough or dupe enough to believe that I had given up such a man as Lord Ebrington for him? "You know, as well as I do," continued Meyler, "that you are only making a merit of necessity. Ebrington got tired of you!"

I bit my lips with indignation, as ladies are wont to do on these occasions; but I remained silent, considering that most dignified. At last I subdued my anger, and held out my hand to him, saying, "Come, *soyons amis*. It is a great misfortune to yourself that your temper is so unhappy; and therefore I will try and forgive the torment it sometimes occasions me. In regard to what you say of my making a *pis-aller* of you, it might perhaps not be very difficult to convince you of the contrary; however of this I do not profess to be certain. At a word then, shall I try the experiment?"

"You know I shall not consent, or you would not ask me," answered Meyler.

"Be it so then," retorted I; "be it as you will, only pray, pray, a little peace if you please, and a little respite from these eternal quarrels, or part we must and part we will!"

Again we were friends, *pour le moment*, and again and again

we quarrelled. Meyler had his fits of good and bad humour alternately. One hour this peevish, spoiled, provoking little creature would declare that we would never part, and that he had determined never to marry for my sake; and the next, he would say that it was not in his nature to be constant. Sometimes, he would profess to feel respect and friendship alone for me; but as to passion, or anything like love, that naturally had gone by long ago: and then he would make strong love to Rosabella.

I cannot help giving myself some little credit for the patience and command of temper with which I endured all these taunts. On another occasion he assured me, in direct contradiction to all this, that I was so profligate that he could not like or respect me; nay more, it was out of his power to respect any woman on earth who had shared her favours with more than one man, and that the very strong passion I had inspired him with was his only reason for staying with me.

I began to grow thin and to lose my appetite owing to the wretched life I led with Meyler, and I often asked myself why I endured it. I must have been naturally steadfast in my attachments, or possessed a very good heart. One of these, I hope, cannot admit of a doubt. At length, Meyler began to despair of putting me in a passion by anything he could say on the subject of Lord Ebrington having cut me dead, and of my having made a merit of returning to him, *faute de mieux*. This was what his jealous, suspicious temper made him really believe, and he never gave a woman the credit of any single good motive for what she did or said. "Perhaps," observed Meyler, in his zeal to tease and provoke, "perhaps Ebrington likes you still and wishes to visit you, while you are so excessively cold-blooded as to leave the man you like to stay with me, because I am so much richer."

"Which of us two must leave the room?" said I, taking up my bonnet and ringing my bell in a violent passion.

Meyler had never seen me so violently disturbed, and half afraid he might have gone too far, he affected to turn the whole

into a mere joke, when he took leave of me, as he said, to dress for dinner.

The very instant he had turned his back I wrote a note to Lord Ebrington, declaring, whether he ever wished to see me again or not, Meyler and I were now really separated: but that it would certainly make me happy, if he were disposed to convince me he was not offended by what I said to him at our last meeting, by coming to me directly.

Lord Ebrington, who lived in my neighbourhood, was at home, and immediately answered my letter in person. Though his pride had not permitted him to show any symptoms of regret when he was dismissed, yet he very willingly expressed his delight and satisfaction at being reinstated.

"Meyler has accuse me of leaving you, to endure his vile temper, merely for his fortune, and that accusation has decided the business. I will therefore receive your visits just as publicly as you please and when you please, for as long as ever we shall both agree together."

Ebrington stayed so long with me, that I was obliged to offer him some of my dinner. In short, difficulties never fail to increase passion even in the coldest breast. Ebrington however, as a lover, was far from cold at any time; but a man may possess very warm passions with a cold heart. Ebrington acknowledged that his heart was cold; at the same time it was on this day rather unusually warmed.

"I love heart in women," said Ebrington, "and am grateful when feeling of any kind is evinced towards me."

His Lordship's extreme gentleness of disposition appeared very attractive when set in contrast with Meyler's tormenting, dogged humour. In short, ours bid fair to grow into a strong, mutual fancy, if not to real, true love, *selon les règles*.

I could not get Ebrington out of the house. He remained with me from five in the evening until past three on the following day, when, after obtaining my promise to receive him again on the same evening, he took his departure in full dress, having called on me the day before, merely with the intention to make

me a flying visit on his way to a large dinner-party. Ward, who, as I have before said, had accompanied him to Paris and lodged with him at the same hotel, entered his room just as he had sat down to a second breakfast, without changing his white silk stockings, etc.

"*Déjeuner restoratif, apparemment?*" said Ward, bowing to him, and mawkish as this may seem in print, it was certainly the most amusing attempt at wit I ever heard from that quarter: although Nugent accuses him of having uttered many more good things.

Ebrington's pretty cabriolet, which he had sent for, was scarcely driven from the door when—enter little Mr. Dick Meyler, M.P. and sugar-baker, as pale as a ghost! I was really shocked, having seldom seen him look so ill, and I took hold of his hand, which was as cold as death.

"Why, Meyler, will you force me from you, if you really have the smallest attachment for me?"

"I saw Ebrington's cabriolet, and had no stomach for going out to dinner yesterday; so down I sat at my window to watch for His Lordship's departure. In about an hour, I saw Ebrington's head put out of your window to order his servant home. I could not endure solitude; therefore, I called on a woman in search of consolation; but she wanted me to make love to her, and I left her in disgust. I then went to Bradshaw, to whom I related everything. He appeared quite surprised at the state of agitation you had put me into, declaring that, from all he had lately observed, he should have firmly believed that I must have been glad and happy to have got rid of you on such easy terms. I was angry and disgusted with him for speaking of you in this manner, and I asked him if he did not think you had used me very ill?

" 'Why,' answered Bradshaw, 'a handsome young fellow like you, with more than twenty thousand a year, ought not to admit that it was in the power of any woman to use him ill. How the deuce can you fret about one who thus openly leaves you to intrigue with another man, almost under your very nose?'

" 'I love her all the better for it: it was a proof of her independence, and affords me a decided proof that my money may all be d——d for anything she cares about it.' "

"You were right there," said I.

"Well," continued Meyler, "as Bradshaw's conversation afforded me no comfort, I returned home to Mr. Brown." (He alluded to an elderly gentleman, a friend and distant relation of his, whom he had invited to accompany him on the continent.) "Mr. Brown expressed himself much struck with my agitated manner and appearance, and strongly advised me to go to bed; but that was impossible. I sat at my window till past two o'clock in the morning, watching for Lord Ebrington."

"And did not you then begin to hate me?" I inquired.

Meyler shook his head, and the tears were actually gathering in his eyes.

"What an unaccountable creature is man!" exclaimed I.

"Ultimately," continued Meyler, "I threw myself on my bed, and fell into a feverish sleep, during which I dreamed that both you and Lord Ebrington were trying to destroy me."

I now felt so tormented between pity for Meyler's unhappiness and disgust at the idea of being longer the slave of such a temper, which no kindness or attention could mend, because it was ever misinterpreted, that I heartily wished Ebrington in Italy, that Meyler might leave me without fear to join the Leicestershire hunt, since August was fast approaching.

"Anything on earth will I do, for a quiet life," said I to Meyler. "I have suffered too much already. My nerves and health are nearly destroyed, and, if this is the perpetual tax upon a little wit or a little beauty, I would I were a homely idiot and the mistress of some clean little hut, where people would let me alone. I can do very well without love, for I can always find plenty of things to laugh at and amuse myself with, only do for heaven's sake let me alone: for nothing you can now say or do shall induce me to be tormented with your society."

"Then I will very soon take my departure for London," answered Meyler, despondingly, "for I see you are really in

earnest. Only promise me that for the short time I feel under the necessity of remaining in Paris, in order to give a fair trial to my medical adviser here, of whom I think highly, not to let me see Ebrington visit you."

"Indeed, I will not," answered I, feelingly, "and I will advise him to continue his journey to Italy very shortly. We will correspond, with your permission, when you are in town, and yet we may meet as friends. I sincerely wish you happy; but, my dear Meyler, our feelings, tastes and characters being so very opposite, added to your extreme irritability and the very vile opinion you entertain of women, renders it morally impossible for me to enjoy a single hour's comfort, when you consider that you have any sort of right over me. For ever and for ever then, we are now free, mind! and, being free, if the humour seizes us mutually at any future time, we will meet, without feeling it incumbent on us to answer a single question as to how we have been employed, or with whom we have been in love. Indeed, Meyler, you will be happier thus. Don't fret about impossibilities."

Meyler was almost convinced that his temper was too bad for my endurance, and that, in fact, it would be better for both that we separated, and that I should only receive him as a visitor. Still Ebrington affected his spirits so terribly, that I was obliged to promise that he should not for the present visit me.

"I want rest," said I, "and I cannot be teased just now. *Allez, mon ami. Amuse-toi bien*, and be sure to tell me when you go to England, that we may take leave of each other."

Meyler was no doubt affected, and felt deeply at particular moments; but he was a hard liver, and his heart was a cold one. He loved riding and good claret better than the finest woman in the world, so that, the first burst over, I have no doubt, with Bradshaw's help, with whom I knew I was no favourite, he soon learned to support the dire calamity of my loss, assisted by some gay, pretty Frenchwoman, of rather more refined manners than those of his lost Dulcineas. However that might be, he never attempted to visit me during another fortnight or more.

Being tired of the idea of a mere animal, whom I had loved for his beauty, I began to grow in love with mind. Ebrington passed the whole of his time with me; but he never brought his cabriolet to my door, and I strictly enjoined him to watch in every direction for Meyler before he ventured to approach my house, in order to spare that little gentleman, if possible, the disgust of seeing him enter. Much as I abhorred deception, I considered this a matter of common delicacy towards a man with whom I had once lived as a wife; but to have denied myself the society of a person so very pleasing, merely to gratify Meyler, who had so coarsely insulted my feelings, I conceived to be quite unnecessary, particularly as I often observed him go out in his barouche with a party of male friends, evidently in improved health and tolerable spirits. Meyler's spirits had never been high since I had known him, owing, probably, to a decayed constitution, for even when I first saw him, strong and blooming as he seemed to the careless observer, he had symptoms of decline about him; and one of them was that lovely transparency of skin and the occasional blue tint of his lips.

Ebrington and I were excellent companions. We both knew the world well, and well we both knew how to laugh at it. We often strolled in the Tuilleries, or down the Champs Elysées. One evening we attempted to enter the former just as the hour had passed for the admittance of strangers.

"*On n'entre pas*," said the *garde royale*, pointing his bayonet fiercely towards the breast of His Lordship, who, without advancing or retreating a single step, fixed his eyes on the man's face and said very slowly:

"*Comme il vous plaira! Cela m'est parfaitement indifférent.*" The guard seemed astonished, and I laughed at His Lordship's extreme coolness.

"I take everything in this life coolly," answered Ebrington, "except you," he added smiling. He then related to me the circumstance of his having one night gone, with the Hon. John William Ward, to the Salon des Etrangers, not knowing that an introduction was necessary, when they were refused admittance.

"I, of course," continued Ebrington, "took the thing very quietly, with my usual *cela m'est infiniment indifférent;* but Ward began to bully and make a noise, and swear at them, declaring that he did too much honour to a mere *tripod de jeu;* but, for my part, I thought him so very absurd, that I was ashamed of him: for, if such was the rule of their house, what were we that should require them to dispense with it?"

It was long since I had been fairly and truly in love. I might very likely have begun again with Lord Ebrington, but that there was a certain hauteur about his character, added to a disposition to be severe and satirical, which rendered him at some moments quite odious. *Au reste*, few men could, when he happened to be in the humour, render themselves more pleasing to a woman than Lord Ebrington. There was, indeed, much of true dignity in his carriage, manner, and general deportment. His countenance bore a strong resemblance to that of the late John Philip Kemble; but, though I conceive no man alive could be more handsome than Kemble, yet His Lordship's features were perhaps more delicately turned: in fact, they would, generally, have had more attraction in a woman's eye, from possessing somewhat more of softness.

Ebrington, in point of every exterior quality, perhaps too in many of his general habits, was a model for English noblemen. Nevertheless, though he never scolded, nor found fault with anybody, he often put me in a passion. If one kept him waiting, or refused even his most trifling request, he would not condescend to complain, and yet there was something about the freezing reserve he assumed on such occasions, which my pride and feeling could ill brook. There was no affectation in this; but much genuine, innate pride. His Lordship was a connoisseur in pictures and statues, and a most enthusiastic admirer of Napoleon, to whom he said he had some idea of paying a visit at St. Helena. In short, the only time I ever heard Ebrington speak like a man of warm feelings, was one evening as we stood in the Place Vendôme, canvassing the merits and the faults of Bonaparte.

Lord Ebrington having accompanied to the continent a party who were impatient to be on their road to Italy, after passing a few more weeks with me began to talk of taking his departure.

"If we like each other again, we will renew our acquaintance on your return," said I, "but pray let us make no promises. I am so delighted to have obtained my liberty, that I am resolved to permit no man on earth to infringe it."

Ebrington, with his cold heart and his proud disposition, naturally loved to feel himself unshackled as well as I did, however he might regret the idea of leaving me. I think Lady Heathcote was one of the party he was to accompany to Italy. Ebrington at last took his leave of me, promising to make Paris in his way back. Our parting was affectionate: it might have been enthusiastic on my part, but that I could not help thinking Ebrington naturally selfish. Yet, since I found him an intelligent, delightful companion, I regretted him for a whole day and night.

The next morning Meyler entered my room before I was out of bed.

"Thank God, Ebrington is off for Italy," said he; "and, knowing you were alone, how could I resist paying you a visit?"

"I am glad to see you, poor little Meyler; but how very pale you are!"

"I have had a severe attack of liver," answered Meyler, "which confined me six days to my bed."

"Indeed, if I had known that, I would have gone to see you. I thought you were gone to Brussels or Versailles, when I did not see you pass in your carriage."

"I am going to England," said Meyler. "Paris does not agree with me, neither will I ever again attempt to live with any woman breathing. You are the first, and shall be the last. I now know myself and my temper, and feel that my only chance of enjoying health or quiet is in living alone: my nerves are so terribly irritable."

"Believe me, Meyler," I answered, "I would never have left

you had there been the slightest hope that my society and attentions could really contribute to your comfort or happiness. I am naturally affectionate, and much the creature of habit. Even now, I would make any sacrifice for you if I could believe it would do you good."

"I trust we shall always continue friends," said Meyler, holding out to me his hand, which was, as I believe I have before said, without any one exception, the most beautiful hand I ever saw in my life. The tones of his voice, naturally melancholy, were now affectingly so. His eyes were rather sunk, and his manner and appearance touched me deeply. I burst into tears!

He asked me in astonishment what had thus affected me.

I would not tell him that I thought him dying, so I expressed my regret that he had not written to me when he was so ill. "Oh!" answered Meyler, "had we been the best friends in the world, I would not then have admitted you. I hate anybody to come near me while I suffer pain. Their pity, or their attention, only makes me worse."

"I am sure that a hot climate would be of service to you," said I.

"So I am told," replied Meyler, "but I know my own temper, and that nothing which disturbs or irritates my nerves can do me any good; and I hate travelling, and should be out of patience fifty times a day, with the bad roads and various inconveniences one must encounter while journeying on the continent: and then, if I am not to hunt in Leicestershire, I may just as well die at once, since that is the only pursuit I have, and my stud is the only thing I am not tired of."

"Thank you," I answered.

"Oh! perhaps, I still like you; at all events, I like no other woman; but, the fact is, I am naturally a much better friend to men than to women; for I believe and put faith in men, while nothing any of you can say or do ever makes me believe in your affection or sincerity."

This characteristic answer of Meyler's dried up my tears.

"Why should I fret about this senseless, heartless being?" thought I.

"You may learn to know and appreciate us better one day or other," I observed coldly.

"I shall go to England in three days," said Meyler. "May I see you constantly till I go?"

It was not in my power to refuse this request from one whom I fancied to be dying in the very bloom of youth; and we passed two whole days together, without once quarrelling. Meyler's late indisposition had, in fact, left him too weak to contend, while I humoured him as though he had been a child.

We slept in separate beds, in the same room; and, on the night previous to Meyler's departure for England, just as we were composing ourselves to rest, Lord Ebrington walked up to my bedside! I screamed aloud. Perhaps I mistook him for a ghost, or, it might be, I dreaded the effect this *mal à propos* visit might have on poor Meyler's shattered and irritable nerves.

"Dear little Harry, have I frightened you?" said Lord Ebrington, in speechless dismay.

I pointed with my finger towards the small French bed, where poor Meyler was still calmly sleeping, and Lord Ebrington hastily bolted from the room. I then got out of bed, and, after steadfastly examining Meyler's features to ascertain that he really slept, seized my lamp, and hastened to awaken my English maid, who slept in a closet adjoining my bedroom, which was situated next to the entrance-room.

I asked her how she came to be so forgetful as to leave the key on the outside of the ante-room.

Martha was frightened to death and begged my pardon; hoped nothing had been stolen.

"A man has entered our bedroom," answered I, and Martha was thinking about fainting!

"Don't faint," said I, "but secure the door instead." I then crept quietly back to my bed, resolved not to tease poor Meyler by acquainting him with Lord Ebrington's unexpected return. I however wrote to His Lordship early the following morning,

desiring him not to make his appearance until Meyler should have left Paris.

For more than a month after Meyler's departure for Melton Mowbray, I continued in very low spirits about him. Lord Ebrington, after travelling two whole days along a flat, ugly country, was seized with a fit of love for me, or disgust of flat countries, I am not sure which.

"Suppose we turn our horses' heads towards Paris again?" said Lord Ebrington to Lady Heathcote, on the third morning after they had quitted that gay delightful city. Now it happened to have been long shrewdly suspected, that my Lady Heathcote could refuse Lord Ebrington nothing. However that may be, certain it is, she did not refuse to return to Paris with the rest of the party, which consisted of—I forget who.

Ebrington, on the wings of love, flew to his faithful Harriette, whom he expected no doubt to find like fair Lucretia, surrounded by her virgins, at their spinning wheels; instead of which—but I told all this before.

I fancy his vanity was irreparably wounded with what he saw on his arrival. He had left me in tears, and returned almost under the impression that he should save me from despair. He was half in love with me for my tenderness of heart. We might have travelled to Italy altogether, and I would have rather made the tour of Italy with Ebrington, than almost anybody I knew, now that he had quarrelled with Ward, or rather cut and parted company with him. No wonder! who could travel with Ward? However, Meyler spoiled my preferment with Ebrington by hurting His Lordship's vanity and thus damping all his ardour.

We passed about a week together, during which time I was continually talking of poor Meyler and lamenting his precarious state of health. Ebrington took his leave of me and of Paris. Could I wonder at it?

To drown care on this terrible occasion, I went to pay Nugent, Luttrell, and Amy a visit, all under one. There was a smart young Frenchwoman waiting in Nugent's ante-room, and we rated him most unmercifully about her.

"It is invariably the case," said Luttrell with his usual earnestness.

"Nugent ought really to hire some sort of a cheap machine in the shape of an equipage, to bring his ladies home in," Amy observed, "for the poor things look very miserable, arriving always alone and on foot."

"I have just hired a large light blue coach to contain six of them with ease. It is rather dirty, and one of the horses is thin and stone-blind, and the other very lame, so they go extremely well together."

Amy, in the plentitude of her goodness, actually invited me to dine with her. She had found out an excellent black-pudding shop, in the first place; in the second, she wanted me to make her *au fait* as to what was going on in Paris, and hoped I would introduce her to some nice men, or at all events give her a place in my opera box, when she should be too poor to hire one for herself. However that might be, I accepted her invitation, because Luttrell and Nugent were pleasant men, particularly the former, and I promised to return to them after I had taken my usual drive in the Bois de Boulogne.

"What can be the matter with you, Harriette?" Luttrell inquired, "that you are eternally driving up that long stupid Bois de Boulogne?"

I replied that I could not live without air.

"Mercy on me, what a tax upon life!" Luttrell said, turning up his eyes

There were, in fact, but few things which Luttrell did not vote a tax on life, being one of the most dissatisfied men I ever knew.

We were summoned to the common drawing-room to receive the visit of my mother. She complained of inflammation in her foot. Nugent prescribed for her. I was indeed surprised at the very respectful attention he showed towards her, it was so strikingly polite. As we were not alone, she soon left us, and I insisted on her taking my carriage, which she promised to send back for me.

"I have often wondered," said Nugent, as soon as my mother had left the room, "how it happened that so very large a family as yours should not only all be very handsome, but likewise so perfectly ladylike and well bred. Now it is accounted for: the secret I discovered in your mother. I have not for many years felt such perfect respect and admiration for a woman who at least must be bordering upon fifty. Not only is she still very handsome and delicate; but there is a certain air of modest dignity in her manner, which, I believe, the greatest libertine in France could not fail to be struck with."

I was more grateful to Nugent than I can describe, for this most warm, uncalled-for, and spontaneous praise of my mother. I knew he only did her justice; but how few among the gay and the fashionable ever think about doing justice to the excellent qualities of a woman of fifty!

"Mind you are here by six," said Amy, as I was leaving her; "because, perhaps, we shall go to the opera, if we can procure a box."

"*Vous voilà*," said I to myself, and then offered her a place in mine.

"Do be punctual," added she, "for it is not the fashion to dress unless when there is a new piece. Come as you are. That is a beautiful plume of white ostrich-feathers in your bonnet. You are always so very magnificent. Remember, black-puddings are good for nothing cold. The French consider them a very *recherché* dish I assure you, and they are much more expensive than in town."

I returned to Amy's just as her black pudding was being served up, and for once in my life I met Luttrell without Nugent

"Nugent is not dead, I hope?" said I

"Oh no," answered Amy, "he has just taken out one of his ladies in his large blue remise."

"Shocking work!" Luttrell observed, with just as pious a face turned towards the ceiling as though he had not lately stepped out of window for love and regard of that fair she who set his brain a madding.

Amy was in a great hurry to go to the opera, and we were comfortably seated in my private box before eight o'clock, and soon visited by my late mild and gentle acquaintance, Lord William Russell, who really appeared very glad to meet with me. In the room downstairs we mustered a tolerably brilliant number of *beaux* about us, for Paris; but Paris was not London. Among them was Lord Fife, who came sailing towards me the moment I entered the room.

"How do you do? How do you do?" said Fife. "Very glad to see you in Paris. Who would have thought to find you here? By-the-bye, you sent me the greatest rogue in the world some time ago, who told me a long story about having served: all entirely humbug. I know Spain well enough, and he had never been there in his life. Could not give the least description of it."

"I am truly sorry that I threw away five pounds on him then; for I might have guessed that your kindness would not have refused to assist him if he had been deserving."

"I did not refuse," answered Fife. "You know my way, I give to everybody, good, bad, or indifferent. I gave him ten pounds, and told him he was the greatest rascal I had ever met with."

I resolved never to be duped again.

"May I presume to inquire after the *petite santé* of Miss Eliza Higgins?" I asked.

"Oh! you are always quizzing me," answered Lord Fife, without answering my question.

Just as Amy, Luttrell and myself were seated in the carriage, Nugent came puffing up to it, whispered in my ear, "Beg ten thousand pardons, Harriette; but want to oblige a lady here, and am going to call on another. You will infinitely oblige me by setting her down. I know I take a liberty; but you may take two with me some other time in return."

It was easy to guess the style of lady who would be at the opera alone, trusting to chance or Nugent for a conveyance.

"Agreed," answered I, "so that I may affect not to understand a word of French."

"Certainly," said Nugent, handing into my carriage a very gaily dressed young lady, whom I set down where he directed without exchanging a single word with her.

As one always requires a good supper after dining at Amy's expense, I accepted Luttrell's invitation to eat cold chicken and drink champagne. During our supper, Amy was entertaining us with the delightful qualities of one Mr. Grefule, a Swiss banker residing at Paris, whom I thought the most absurd, affected, mean, contemptible blockhead I had ever met with. It is true I knew but little about him and cared less, and may have been mistaken in all but his stinginess, of which I had an opportunity of judging, having heard that subject discussed by those who knew him well.

"You surely must be in love with his large property?" said I to Amy.

"In love with his property! Why, is he not an Adonis?"

Amy's Adonis is a short, thick man, almost a mulatto, with little purblind eyes and straight, coarse, black hair; and his age at least five and forty.

CHAPTER XXIII

The next day, Henry Brougham, M.P., engaged me to dine with him at Verié's in the Palais Royal. He had invited Nugent and Luttrell to join us, but not Amy. The shrewd observations which Brougham made during dinner, on all he had heard and seen in the morning, having passed several hours of it listening to the debates, *dans la Chambre des Paris*, not only amused, they astonished me. I never yet came in contact with such a memory as Brougham's in my life. It was not like Worcester's, gaping wide open, to receive and retain all the trash that might assail his ears. Brougham caught the substance and pith of what he heard with peculiar tact, while the prose and folly appeared to have flitted across his memory but an instant, and then passed away like chaff, leaving only real matter behind.

After dinner, we went to witness Talma's performance in one of Racine's tragedies, Brougham being a very great admirer of French dramatic poetry. Before we parted, Brougham promised to present me to a very interesting new acquaintance of his, in the shape of a very fine, noble-looking, elderly man, whose name I have forgotten. He was a peer of France, and certainly one of the best bred and most imposingly respectable men I ever had the good fortune to meet with. He did Brougham and me the honour to accompany us to the Théâtre François, and I saw him depart with feelings of real regret, being well aware that I was not likely to fall into his society again.

Brougham I saw very frequently, and I one day took the liberty of consulting him on the subject of my annuity from the Duke of Beaufort, which His Grace refused to pay me, owing to my having been induced to write a few lines to Lord Worcester, contrary to the letter of the bond.

Brougham said boldly, and at a public dinner-table, that it was a mean, paltry transaction, the object of the Duke being fully obtained by my final separation from his son, to seize hold of such a pretext for depriving me of a bare existence. He advised me to bring the cause to trial by all means; had no doubt of its success; afterwards wrote to me from England to the same effect, and I showed his letter to young Montagu, who was a friend of the Duchess of Beaufort, and often on a visit to her at Badminton. This gay young man was, however, now passing a few weeks at Paris.

Before Brougham went to England he very kindly promised to give me every assistance in his power, provided I would take the advice he so strongly recommended, of proceeding against His Grace of Beaufort.

"In the first place," said Brougham, "Lord Worcester could not in common decency, even supposing it were possible that he wished it—and I will not for an instant imagine that possible, or in human nature—but even if he wished to bring your letter, written under such circumstances, in evidence against you, shame must hold him back.

Everybody agreed with Brougham. Even his friend Montagu said that, of course, Lord Worcester would not think of turning witness against me in a court of justice. That, he said, was quite out of the question; but he understood that his evidence or oath would not be required to prove that I had forfeited the bond.

I asked Montagu how he could excuse his friend the Duke of Beaufort for acting so very selfish and mean a part towards me, who had trusted so entirely to his honour.

"Why, as for the Duke," said Montagu, "he was wholly guided in this business by Lord Worcester. For my part, I do not want to enter on the subject of what you may or may not deserve from Lord Worcester; but this I will say, that be your merits or demerits what they may, I think Worcester ought not to leave you unprovided for. It was due to himself and to his high rank after what had passed, that you should not be thrown

upon the wide world, and so I will tell Worcester as I tell you, were he here at this moment. In Worcester's place I would most unquestionably have seen you provided for."

Now it would certainly be very easy for Montagu to deny having uttered one word of the above; for I cannot prove that he did. Luttrell and Nugent were present, it is true: but this discourse having been addressed to me by Montagu, who sat next to me at a dinner, or evening-party, and in a low voice, they in all probability had something more pleasant to do than listen to us. Nevertheless, as I believe in my heart that Edward Montagu is a perfect gentleman, he will not, I imagine, be ashamed to avow anything he ever said to me on this or any other subject.

I was very sorry to lose Brougham's society: his polite attention had flattered me greatly, and his conversation had been a source of the highest gratification to me. I disliked the idea of proceeding against the Duke of Beaufort: however, I promised to take the matter into serious consideration, and Brougham took his leave of me and of Paris nearly at the same moment.

During my stay in Paris Lord Herbert was introduced to me by Mr. Bradshaw. It was at a large party. I remember that I was very much struck with Lord Herbert's beauty, for it was generally believed that he was married to the Duke Spinelli's sister, whose name I have forgotten. As we had much conversation together, I asked him if this was really the case.

"No, to be sure not," answered His Lordship, to whom the subject appeared to be very annoying. "How can you fancy I would marry a d——d old Italian, old enough to be my mother? She answered my purpose very well while I was there, and I certainly entertained a violent passion for her. We, in fact, never met, during her husband's existence, but at the risk of both our lives in the event of a discovery, which was not at all impossible. Our only place of rendezvous was the garden. The very night her husband died I made a bet that I would accomplish my wishes as usual; and I won it."

Had Lord Herbert's profligacy not been so extravagant, I

should probably have fallen in love with him; but profligacy, and such profligacy, in a man, was ever disgusting to me. I allude to that barefaced want of decency which is in so very bad taste, and more particularly when it is unaccompanied by wit or humour; for then it appears in all its native ugliness! Not that I love a saint: but rather something which is most luxuriously sly and quiet.

As I was one day taking a solitary drive up the Champ Elyseés on my road to the Bois de Boulogne, the Duke of Wellington galloped past my carriage. He did look at me; but passing so rapidly I was uncertain whether he recognised me or not. In another instant he had returned and was at the side of my carriage.

"I thought it was you," said Wellington, "and am glad to see you are looking so beautiful. I'll come and see you. How long have you been in Paris? When may I come? Where do you live? How far are you going?"

"Which of these questions do you desire to have answered first, Wellington?" I inquired.

"I want to know where you live?"

"At thirty-five Rue de la Paix."

"And may I pay you a visit?"

"When you like."

"I'll come to-night at eight o'clock. Will that suit you?" I assented, and shook hands with him. His Lordship was punctual and came to me in a very gay equipage. He was all over orders and ribbons of different colours, bows, and stars, and he looked pretty well.

"The ladies here tell me you make a bad hand at Ambassadorship," said I to him.

"How so?"

"Why, the other day you wrote to ask a lady of rank if you might visit her, *à cheval?* What does that mean pray?"

"In boots, you foolish creature! What else could it mean?"

"Why the lady thought it just possible that the great Villainton, being an extraordinary man, might propose entering her

drawing-room on the outside of his charger, as being the most warrior-like mode of attacking her heart."

"You are a little fool," said Wellington, kissing me by main force.

"And then your routs are so ill conducted, the society so mixed."

"What is that to me? I don't invite the people. I suppose they ask everybody to avoid offence. Who the devil was that old woman last Friday?"

"What do you mean? I was not there. What sort of an old woman do you allude to?" I inquired, laughing.

"An old woman with a piece of crape hanging down here," said he, pointing to his breast, "and ragged red shoes."

"How am I to know all your ragamuffins?"

I hope my readers have now had enough of the immortal Wellington. In short, they must e'en be satisfied, whether they have or not; for they will get nothing better out of him.

Wellington was no inducement for me to prolong my stay in Paris, and as Bonaparte was now on his way from Elba, I began to prepare for my departure. The English were all hurrying away in a state of great alarm.

My mother, having settled herself in a small house just out of Paris, expressed her determination to remain where she was; so did Amy. They were neither of them in the least alarmed. For my part, besides being very anxious to see my sister Fanny, my finances required that I should return to London.

Before I quit Paris, I must once more revert to the *comment ça va?* of the Prince Esterhazy, who thus addressed me in his usual coarse style at a masquerade, but without his mask.

Lord Beauchamp asked His Excellency to remain with me, while he left us to pay his respects to some old acquaintance.

In the course of our conversation, the Prince let fall a remark which astonished me. He actually alluded to our former intimacy!

"What intimacy ever existed between you and me, pray, beyond that of common acquaintance?"

"*Est-il possible?* Did nothing more happen?"

"Do you doubt it still?"

"To be sure. I really thought I had been your favoured lover for some time, when I was last in England!"

"Your intrigues then are so frequent, that you forget with whom they occur, it should seem?"

Esterhazy laughed with the most perfect self-complacency.

I met the Prince in the New Road, at the outskirts of London, some time afterwards. He pulled up his horse, to inquire about my health and learn where I was to be found. I gave him a very incorrect address, and his groom had on the following day failed to find me out. The Prince then set off in his curricle, to search for me himself, and having found a house in the neighbourhood where I had formerly lived, he wanted the owners to take charge of a letter for me, which was rudely refused. On the third day the Prince's servant was again despatched on the same errand, and he was at last successful.

"I have been two whole days vainly endeavouring to find you out, madam," said the servant, while delivering into my hands the Prince's note, which contained an earnest request for me to appoint an hour to receive his visit.

I named Sunday at two o'clock, and immediately handed over his note to Mr. Livius, the amateur playwriter, French horn-blower, lady-killer, etc. He joined with me in anxious surprise, at what this sudden *impressement* of a man who for years had been in the constant habit of meeting me in public, could mean.

On Sunday morning, it so happened that Livius wanted me to read my translation of Molière's play to him.

"But the German Prince?" said I.

"Oh, never mind a German Prince! I'll wait in the parlour while you speak to him, in case he should have any secret communication to make to you."

Livius called at one o'clock, and, just as I was about to begin my play, Esterhazy drove up to my door.

Livius saw him from the window, and went down into the parlour.

The Prince entered and, throwing off his large German cloak, shook hands with me.

"Prince," said I, "I know you don't come here to make love to me, which knowledge renders me the more curious to learn what you do come here for."

"Why," said the Prince, "I have a high opinion of you, and always had."

I bowed.

"In short, I have great confidence in you, and think you a very clever good creature, besides that you speak and write such excellent French."

"True, Prince! I remember that, presuming on this good opinion of yours, some time ago I ventured to address a letter to you in French, requesting you for old acquaintance's sake to send me a little cash, of which I stood much in need; but neither my excellent French nor all my other charming qualities to boot could excite in you the least desire to serve me."

"Quite the contrary," said the Prince, "nothing will give me greater pleasure."

"Indeed! Why, they say you are at all times the most stingy rich man in Europe."

"I assure you, Harriette," answered the Prince, "that you can have no conception of the vast number of letters I receive containing applications for money. It is indeed quite impossible to satisfy them all: but, as to you, as a proof of my goodwill, I beg you to accept what I happen to have about me."

He took out his pocket-book and presented me with a ten-pound note!

This Prince Esterhazy was nothing to me, and never had been, nor could be but a common acquaintance; so I thought I might just as well buy myself some little trinket with his magnificent donation as refuse to accept it.

"It is all I happen to have about me," said the Prince, observing that I blushed for him, not for myself, at the insignificance of the sum; "but, rely on my future friendship. I am going to point out to you how we may serve each other very

effectually. I want a friend like you. It is what I was always accustomed to have in Paris. In short, I want to make the acquaintance of some interesting young ladies. I hate those which are common or vulgar; now you could make a party here in this delightful, pretty cottage, and invite me to pay my court to any young lady of your acquaintance, perhaps your sister!"

"Do you allude to an innocent girl, Prince?" said I; "and do you really imagine that, for all your fortune, paid to me twice over, I would be instrumental in the seduction of a young lady of education? And, if I would, would you not yourself scruple, as a married man, to be the cause of misery to a poor young creature?"

"There are many girls who determine on their own fall," said Esterhazy. "All I want is that, when you see them going down, you will give them a gentle push, thus," said he, "to accelerate their fall," making signs, with his hand, on my shoulders.

"Prince," I replied, "I will never injure a woman while I breathe, and I will assist and serve those of my own sex whenever I can, as I always have done. No innocent girl, however inclined she may be to fall, shall receive the push you suggest from me. On the contrary, I will always lend my hand, as I did to my sister Sophia, to try to prevent her from falling, or to lift her up again. If I knew a poor young creature, deserted by her friends and her seducer, and you would make a provision for her during her life, I would for her sake, not for yours, perhaps present her to you."

"Perhaps I would make a settlement on her," said Esterhazy; "but mind, she must be very young, very fair, and almost innocent."

"The only person I know who exactly answers your description, and for whom as a poor deserted orphan it would be a charity to provide, is in Paris."

"She might just as well be in the East Indies," said Esterhazy.

"Why, you are like the princess in Tom Thumb! And all the

while you have the enjoyment of the most beautiful wife in Europe!"

"Oh Harriette! a wife is altogether so very different from what is desirable, no sort of comparison can be made with them; but," continued His Excellency, taking up his cloak, "I cannot possibly stop now, because I must meet His Majesty at this very hour. Tell me the best time to find you and I will come often. In the meantime, pray write to me. You shall see me very soon": and he hurried away.

In two days he came to me again, in a dirty greatcoat, all over wet and mud, just at my dinner-time. He placed himself before my fire so that I could not see a bit of it, with his hat on, and declared he was much disappointed at not having heard from me.

"Take your hat off, Prince," said I.

"I never take it off, nor behave differently to the first duchess in the land! It is my way. I cannot alter it. I am too old to mend. I saw two of the most lovely sisters, walking with their mothers to-day. They would not measure round the waist more than so much"—describing to me the circumference with his hands. "I watched them home, to No. —— in —— Street. Do pray contrive to get acquainted with them."

"You had better leave my house," said I, beginning to be truly disgusted at the very honourable employment which this princely representative of Imperial dignity, morality, disinterestedness, and humanity wished to force upon me.

"At all events, take off your hat, Prince, and let me see the fire!"

"I tell you I will do no such thing," asseverated the Prince, with the dignified positiveness of his own imperial master.

"*Ou ôtes ton chapeau, monsieur le prince, ou va-t-en au diable! comme je t'ai dis auparavant*," said I, in a passion.

"*Je prendrai le dernier parti*," said the Prince, leaving the room.

"*Et tant mieux*," I observed to him, as he went downstairs.

I am indeed most inexcusably forgetful, I should otherwise have described, in its proper time and place, that famous

masquerade which was given by the members of Wattier's club to all the nobility in England, in honour of peace between Great Britain and France, which occurred prior to my leaving England. It was the most brilliant assemblage I had ever witnessed. Amy, Fanny and I were promised tickets from the very beginning; but poor Julia was not popular. After making vain applications to half the town, and to all the members of the club who were stewards of the feast, she at last addressed herself to Lord Hertford.

"I am not a member of Wattier's; therefore I cannot obtain a lady's ticket for you," said His Lordship; "but, if you like to go in boy's clothes, I have one at your disposal; but not transferable, mind."

Julia was very shy and did not like boy's clothes; but Julia's legs were perhaps the handsomest in Europe, and then Julia knew there was no remedy: so, after accepting Lord Hertford's polite offer with many thanks, I accompanied her to Mr. Stultze, the German regimental tailor and moneylender in Clifford Street.

It was just before I left England for Paris. I cannot think why I am so very careless as not to put more order into my memoirs. However, when a person gives a bad dinner, and apologises for not giving you a better, the apology is always more insufferable than the dinner.

We asked Stultze's advice about a modest disguise for Julia, and he referred us to a book full of drawings therein exhibited, the dress of an Italian or Austrian peasant-boy and girl, I forget which; but I remember that Julia wore black satin small-clothes, plaited very full round the waist, *à la Cossaque*, fastened tight at the knee, with a smart bow, fine, black, transparent silk stockings, black satin shoes, cut very short in the quarters, and tied with a large red rosette, a French cambric shirt, with beautifully small plaited sleeves, a bright blue, rich silk jacket without sleeves, trimmed, very thick, with curiously wrought silver bell-buttons, and a plain round black hat with a red silk band and bow.

I, as Julia's fair companion, was to wear a bright red, thick silk petticoat, with a black satin jacket, the form of which was very peculiar and most advantageous to the shape. The sleeves were tight, and it came rather high upon the breast. It was very full-trimmed, with a double row of the same buttons Julia wore. My shoes were black satin, turned over with red morocco; my stockings were of fine blue silk, with small red clocks; my hat was small, round, and almost flat, the crown being merely the height of a full puffing of rich pea-green satin ribbon. The hat was covered with satin of the same colour, and placed on one side at the back of the head. The hair was to fall over the neck and face in a profusion of careless ringlets, and, inside my vest, an Indian amber-coloured handkerchief.

Stultze brought home our dresses himself in his tilbury, on the morning of the masquerade, being anxious that we should do him credit. Everything fitted us to a hair. The crowd was expected to be immense, and we were advised to get into our carriage at five in the afternoon, as, by so doing, we should stand a chance of arriving between nine and ten o'clock, at which hour the rooms were expected to be quite full.

Fanny chose the character of a country house-maid. She wore short sleeves to show her pretty arms, an Indian, glazed, open, coloured gown, neatly tucked up behind, a white muslin apron, coloured handkerchief, pink glazed petticoat, and smart, little, high, muslin cap.

What character in the name of wonder did Amy choose? That of a nun, forsooth!

We were actually on our road, seated in the carriage, from the hour of five till nine. At last we arrived and were received at the first entrance-room by the Dukes of Devonshire and Leinster, dressed in light blue dominos. They were unmasked, this being the costume fixed on for all the members of Wattier's club. No one else was to be admitted but in character. The newspapers described this most brilliant fête in glowing colours long ago, and much better than I can do it; I will therefore merely state that it exceeded all my highest flights of imagina-

tion, even when, as a child, I used to picture to my fancy the luxurious palaces of the fairies described in my story-books.

One of the immense suite of rooms formed a delicious, refreshing contrast to the dazzling brilliancy of all the others. This room contained, in a profusion almost incredible, every rare exotic root and flower. It was lighted by large ground glass, French globe-lamps, suspended from the ceiling at equal distances. The rich draperies were of pale green satin and white silver muslin. The ottomans, which were uniformly placed, were covered with satin to correspond with the drapery, and fringed with silver. Mixing carelessly in the motley throng, I did not discover this charming spot till I had been there some time.

On our entrance, the Duke of Devonshire presented us with tickets for a raffle. "These," said His Grace bowing low, without in the least guessing who we were, "these tickets will entitle you to one chance each in the lottery, which will commence drawing at twelve o'clock."

The two best characters in my opinion, were the Honourable Douglas Kinnaird as a Yorkshireman in search of a place, and Colonel Armstrong as an old, stiff, maiden-lady of high rank in the reign of Queen Anne. He wore no mask; but his face, though curiously patched and painted, was easily known. He sat on a bench, with his hoops and ruffles and high powdered head, his point laced lappets, etc., fanning himself, and talking to his young maids of honour, who sat one on each side of him. Everybody who passed stopped to examine him with much doubtful curiosity, which was constantly followed by a loud laugh, and exclamations of, "It is Colonel Armstrong!" "Ha! ha! ha!" "Capital!" Those who could command their countenances among the ambassadors, and men who bore high characters, for that night at least, addressed him in the most obsequious manner, with "I hope your Ladyship caught no cold at Lady Betty's last night. Immense crowd! Charming evening!"

Armstrong answered all these orations, sticking close to the

character and with the most dignified politeness, while the loud, vociferous roars of laughter which were bestowed on his successful efforts to make himself so very ridiculous, never once tempted him to move a single visible muscle of his odd countenance.

One of his lace lappets came unpinned.

"I'll trouble you for a pin, my dear," said Armstrong to one of his attendant maidens.

"I have not got one," answered the fair virgin, in confusion.

She was, if I remember rightly, a young rake of fashion thus disguised.

"Oh fie, child! You ought always to have your pincushion about you. Always, always, child!" fanning himself with increased rapidity.

Douglas Kinnaird was unfeelingly severe on almost everybody in their turn. To one gay fashionable mother, whose name I have forgotten, he said, "Why Missis, you've been hawking them girls all over the world for these last six years, and sin they be made to hong upon hond like, mayhap they'd go off better all of a lump, if you was to tie um up in bunches you see, as they do cherries, look ye. I manes no offence."

Fanny, in her housemaid's dress, and with her natural, lively humour, made an excellent companion for Kinnaird, who appeared much pleased with her and delighted to draw her out, although he had not any idea who she was. The fact is, we had determined not to unmask or make ourselves known to anybody during the whole evening.

Meyler looked very interesting and handsome, in his blue domino of rich *Gros de Naples*. I had given him leave to find me out if he could, and I guessed that he was busily but vainly employed in the pursuit. I waltzed and danced quadrilles with half the young ladies and gentlemen in the room.

"Is that a boy, or a girl, think you?" was the question from every mouth, as Julia and I passed them. "The leg is a boy's, the finest I ever saw," said one; "but then that foot, where shall we find a boy with such delicate feet and hands?" Still it

remained a puzzle, and everybody seemed undecided as to the sex of Julia.

"Who can they be?" said Mrs. Scott Waring to Berkeley Craven.

"I want to know myself," answered he; "for I am in love with the lady's feet."

"I think they are both ladies," returned Mrs. Scott Waring.

"Pray who made that lovely shoe to fit that pretty foot so charmingly?" Berkeley Craven asked me.

I was determined not to open my lips, lest my voice should betray me to Berkeley Craven.

"We are admiring your feet and ankles," said Mrs. Scott Waring, addressing herself to me; but I was still dumb, preferring the idea of passing for a fool, to the risk of making myself known. At last, Meyler discovered my sister Fanny by her voice.

"Pray point out Harriette to me," said Meyler, "for I am tired and worn out with my fruitless search."

"That is Harriette," answered Fanny, directing his attention to a young flower-girl who, with her disguised mincing voice, kept him a quarter of an hour in suspense, before he could ascertain the joke Fanny had practised against him; and it took him a second quarter of an hour to find Fanny again.

"Oh you little, wicked, provoking creature!" exclaimed Meyler, at length, catching hold of her hand. "I now vow and declare not to relinquish this fair hand until you conduct me to your sister."

"Upon my word and honour that nun is my sister," answered Fanny, leading him towards Amy, who was standing near her in conversation with Colonel Armstrong.

"Thank you," said Meyler, releasing Fanny's hand in his zeal to join the nun.

Fanny was out of sight in one instant, and, in the next, Meyler had discovered his mistake and resumed his pursuit of her.

"Why is this unusual pressure of company?" I inquired of a

gay captain of Italian banditti with whom I had been waltzing. It was owing to the raffle! Having been absolutely carried along by the immense concourse of ladies, we came up close to Lord Kinnaird, who was dealing out the blanks and prizes.

"Nay, don't push forward so, ladies," said His Lordship, "now, pray, really, I must beg. This is almost unladylike. Patience then! Ladies, I cannot endure this pressure. Ladies, I must retire. Ladies, I am overpowered," and he handed someone a small French prize; to Fanny a pretty brooch; to me, a blank. "Ladies, I never knew ladies so violent and rude before."

Poor man! He might well complain, supposing he had been the meekest of Christians, which is not exactly the case: for never was poor knight of the ladies so hemmed in, squeezed and teased.

Lord Kinnaird is not, I have heard say, a popular man; but as I have always seen him pleasant and gentlemanly, except when fair ladies tried to squeeze the breath out of his body, it gives me pleasure to assert that I cannot help thinking favourably of him, notwithstanding he admired my sister Amy infinitely more than me.

William Lamb, who is very handsome, wore a magnificent Italian dress, supported no character, and looked so stupid, I could not help fancying that Lady Caroline had insisted on his showing himself thus beautiful, to gratify her vanity: for, to do William Lamb justice, his character is in truth a manly one, and I will venture to say this said tawdry dress was never one of his own choosing.

I know not how I came to lose my party, just as the grand supper-rooms were thrown open to accommodate, as I should guess, at the least five thousand people. I was in a great fright lest I should lose my supper. The rooms were suddenly deserted. I found myself alone; but it was only for an instant. A gentleman in a rich white satin Spanish dress, and a very magnificent plume of white ostrich-feathers in his hat, suddenly seized me in his arms, and forcing over my chin my mask,

which was fastened loosely to admit of air, pressed his lips with such ardour to mine that I was almost suffocated; and all this without unmasking, but merely by raising for an instant, the thick black crape, which fully concealed the lower part of his face. I would have screamed, but from a dread of what might follow.

"This is most unmanly conduct," said I, as soon as I could recover my breath.

"My dear, dear, sweet, lovely Harriette," said the mask, "I implore your forgiveness of a poor married wretch, who hates and abhors the wife whom circumstances oblige him to fear. I have been mad for you these five years. I knew you were here, and how could I fail to discover you? I shall never on earth have such another opportunity, and I had taken an oath to press my lips to yours as I have now done, before I died."

"I believe this to be all nonsense," answered I, "so pray tell me who you are."

"So far from it," answered the mask, with mysterious earnestness, "that, after what has passed, were you to discover me I would blow my brains out."

"Not surely, if I were secret as the grave itself?"

"I would not trust you! But come, I am keeping you from your supper. I accompanied my wife in the disguise of an Italian monk, and having only this instant changed it for the gay one I now wear, I will venture to hand you down to supper, and place you at the greatest distance from my own family; but I entreat one more kiss, dear Harriette, and if ever the fates make me free, then you shall not doubt my affection. The feelings you have inspired in me are unaccountable, even to myself. I am in love with your character."

"Are you old?"

"Guess my age," answered the mysterious mask.

"To judge of you by the nonsense you talk, I should say twenty; but by your voice, your hands, and your person, I should say five and thirty."

"No matter which," said the mask, sighing, or making a feint

to sigh. I do not pretend to say it was a true, genuine sigh! "No matter; for I shall, I fear, never enjoy your society more."

I liked his voice, and there was something romantic throughout this little adventure which pleased me. I was in high spirits, and the mask's beautiful dress was set off by a very fine person: and so, when he again insisted on more kisses, I candidly confess I never once dreamed of calling out murder.

"Come," said the mask at last, dragging me hastily towards the supper rooms, "you shall not lose your supper for such an insignificant wretch as I am: and yet, had I known you before my marriage, my dearest and most generous of all human beings, you should never have been exposed to the cold-blooded, unfeeling wretches who have always taken such an unfair advantage of you."

"Why be a slave to any unamiable woman?" I inquired.

"Political necessity," replied the mask, in a low whisper.

"Do you think I believe all this incredible, romantic nonsense? Why, you are some strolling player perhaps!"

"No matter: for we are not likely to meet again," the mask said coldly.

"I am glad," added he, "that the little you have heard and seen of me is disagreeable to you; for, neither wife nor children nor politics should have kept me from Harriette Wilson, if it had been possible for her to have loved me only half as much as she once loved——" he paused.

"Who?"

"Ponsonby."

"Do you know Lord Ponsonby?" I inquired, with surprise.

"It is of no consequence. You are losing your supper. I will conduct you to your own party."

The mask now hurried me along so fast, that I arrived at the table panting for breath.

"Make room for your sister," whispered the mask in Fanny's ear, as soon as he approached her, and the next moment we were both seated.

"Is there nothing in the tone of my voice or in my manner

which seems familiar to you?" questioned the mask, in a low voice.

"Nothing, positively."

"And my kisses? Think you that you felt them to-night for the very first time in your life?"

I started, and threw a hasty earnest glance on the person of the stranger; for there had indeed seemed magic in his kiss; and, while his lips were pressed to mine, I did think on Ponsonby, yet it was quite impossible that this should have been His Lordship, who was, I knew, on the continent. Neither was it his voice nor his person.

"Tell me; did you several times receive money sent to you in a blank envelope by the post?"

"And was it you who——?"

"No, not I," interrupted the mask. "A mere accident made me acquainted with the circumstance, and yet I am always near you, I watch over you like a poor wretch, as I am," said he, seizing my hand, and, pressing his lips most ardently on every part of it, he arose from the supper table and was out of sight in an instant.

Before I could recover my astonishment, a man habited as a friar came towards me, and bending his head close to my ear said, in a tremulous voice, affected by real agitation, or, if otherwise, it was excellent acting, "Farewell, daughter! Every night I shall fervently pray that you and I may love each other in a better world!" It was the stranger-mask, who again vanished from my sight never to return.

I soon forgot this odd adventure; because I was not so radically vain as to conceive it possible that I could have excited such deep interest in the breast of any individual, as could thus survive hope and feed on air! "It is a mere masquerade-trick, got up to perplex me; so I'll e'en not puzzle about it," thought I.

"Have you everything that you require, at this end of the table?" said Meyler, passing close to me, and bowing with distant respect: for the table was so excessively crowded, and

there were so many more housemaids in nearly the same costume as Fanny, that he passed her without observing his late tormentor, otherwise he might have guessed that I could not be far off.

Douglas Kinnaird kept up his character the whole of the evening, and contributed much to our amusement during supper. This consisted of every rare delicacy, in and out of season. The wines were delicious, and the members of Wattier's club were as attentive to us as though they had all been valets, and bred up to their situations like George Brummell, who, by-the-bye, was the only exception. Instead of parading behind our chairs to inquire what we wanted, he sat teasing a lady with a wax mask, declaring that he would not leave her till he had seen her face.

I love a masquerade; because a female can never enjoy the same liberty anywhere else. It is delightful to me to be able to wander about in a crowd, making my observations, and conversing with whomsoever I please without being liable to be stared at or remarked upon, and to speak to whom I please, and run away from them the moment I have discovered their stupidity. Fanny was very angry with me for running away from her after supper; but I was in my glory, and determined to enjoy myself in perfect freedom. I chatted with everybody who addressed me, just long enough to ascertain that they were uninteresting people.

At last I found myself in the still quiet room I have before described. It was entirely deserted, save by one solitary individual. He was habited in a dark brown flowing robe, which was confined round the waist by a leathern belt, and fell in ample folds to the ground. His head was uncovered, and presented a fine model for the painter's art. He was unmasked, and his bright penetrating eyes seemed earnestly fixed, I could not discover on what. "Surely he sees beyond this gay scene into some other world, which is hidden from the rest of mankind," thought I, being impressed, for the first time in my life, with an idea that I was in the presence of a supernatural being.

His attitude was graceful in the extreme. His whole countenance so bright, severe, and beautiful, that I should have been afraid to have loved him.

After watching his unchanged attitude for nearly ten minutes, I ventured to examine that side of the room towards which his fine head was directed; but there was nothing visible at all likely to fix the attention of anyone after the first *coup d'œil.* "Can this be a mere masquerade-attitude for effect, practised in an empty room?" though I, being almost convinced that I had not been observed. His age might be eight and twenty, or less; his complexion clear olive; his forehead high; his mouth, as I afterwards discovered, was beautifully formed, for at this moment the brightness of the eyes and their deep expression fixed the whole of my attention. "Surely that man's thoughts are occupied with intense interest, on something he sees, which is beyond our common sight or conception," said I, encouraging the mysterious turn of ideas which had obtained the mastery over my imagination; "and I will speak to him." I approached slowly, and on the points of my feet. The stranger seemed not to have observed me; for he did not change his position, nor did his eyes move from their fixed and penetrating gaze on what seemed but space and air, until I came up, close to him, and addressed him thus:

"I entreat you to gratify my curiosity. Who and what are you, who appear to me a being too bright and too severe to dwell among us?"

He started violently, and reddened, while he answered rather peevishly, "You had better bestow your attention on someone more worthy of you, fair lady. I am a very stupid masquerade-companion"; and he was going away.

"Listen to me," said I, seizing one of his beautiful little hands, urged on by irresistible curiosity, "whoever you are, it is clear to me that my intrusion bores you; but it cannot be more annoying to you than your running away will be to me. Do not torment me, to secure to yourself a moment's ease. I promise to leave you at liberty in one quarter of an hour; nor will I insist

on your disclosing your name, and I promise you shall not know mine."

The stranger hesitated.

I had addressed him in French; because I wore a foreign costume, and had promised Meyler, when he presented me with a ticket, that I would remain the whole evening *incognita*.

The stranger hesitated.

"Don't you understand French?" I inquired.

"Perfectly."

"Well then, take out your watch. In one quarter of an hour you shall be free from all my persecution; but, give me that time, pray do!"

"Agreed," said the stranger smiling, as he gracefully offered me his arm.

"This," said I, pressing the arm I had taken, "this seems, I am sorry to say, to be mere solid flesh and blood. I had fancied——"

"What?"

"Why," continued I, half ashamed of myself, "upon my word and honour, I do confess I thought you something supernatural!"

The stranger's countenance brightened, and he asked me eagerly if I had ever seen him before.

"Never, nor am I naturally superstitious or weak."

"I am not much like the world, I believe," said the stranger; "but I am merely one of ye."

"Does not that satisfy you?" I inquired.

"No; I would be more or less: anything rather than myself; but what is all this to you? Are you a Frenchwoman?"

"No; English."

"Nonsense!"

"Fact, upon my word."

"Well then, let me hear you speak in your own language?"

"Excuse me."

"*Allons!* I like even an Englishwoman better than a Frenchwoman. Not, I assure you, from any national prejudice

in their favour; but Frenchwomen are my aversion, generally speaking."

"No matter, I do not require you to like me, for you are too handsome to love in vain."

"What! Then you really could not return my passion?"

"No, upon my word; and yet your countenance is magnificently beautiful!"

"So much the better," answered he; "for I am sick to death of woman's love, particularly to-night."

I looked at the stranger with earnest curiosity.

"You are what most ladies would call very conceited and impertinent, but I can forgive you; because I have not discovered any affectation in your manner, and you appear to speak as you feel, and to feel like a man whose natural superiority has made him despise and look down on the common every-day blessings of life."

"Perhaps you are right, and no doubt I have been very rude: but then you really struck me as rather a sensible girl, and, if so, you will not like me the worse for saying whatever comes into my head, just as it may occur. Why did you make believe to be English?"

"An Englishwoman would have had too good taste not to have fallen in love with you, perhaps you mean; but," added I, in English, "the fact is, I am English: nevertheless, I could not love you, though you were to break your heart about it."

"Who can you be?" said the stranger, in evident surprise, "and why, if you dislike me, were you so very desirous to speak to me?"

"Who on earth could dislike you? Now would I forswear love, which has hitherto been my all, to follow you to banishment or to death, so that I could be considered your equal, worthy to be consulted by you as a friend; for, though I do not know you, yet I guess that you are on earth and that there's nothing like you. I could pity you, for your fifty thousand weaknesses and errors, adore your talents, and——"

"Here is a high flight," interrupted the stranger, "I can now

guess who you are; but dare not name the person I take you to be, lest I offend. Yet," and he paused to examine my person and my feet, "yet, it is impossible it can be anybody else. Why did you affect not to know me? Was it one of my weaknesses you wanted to humour, by appearing to guess me something out of the common way?"

"Indeed I do not know you: and it has only this instant struck me, for the first time, that you must be Lord Byron, whom I have never seen."

"And you are Harriette Wilson."

We shook hands cordially.

"I know you hate me, Lord Byron," said I.

"On the contrary, upon my word, you inspired me with a very friendly disposition towards you at once. I was in the humour to quarrel with everybody, and yet I could not resist offering you my arm."

"You did not, I fear, believe in women's friendship and affection, towards men they could not love."

"Why could not you love me? Mind, I only ask from curiosity."

"It is a foolish question."

"I agree with you. Love comes on, we know not why nor wherefore, for certain objects, and for others never will come."

"And yet, I think, I can describe why I could never entertain anything like passion for you. Your beauty is all intellectual. There is nothing voluptuous in the character of it. Added to this, I know that such a man as you are, ought not, or if he ought, he will not, make women his first pursuit; and, to love at all, he must feel pride in the object of his affections. I might excite your passions; but then, such contempt as you have lavished on poor Lady Caroline Lamb would kill me."

"Is there any sort of comparison to be made between you and that mad woman?" Lord Byron asked.

"No matter! I would never put myself in the power of a man who could speak thus of any lady whom he had once professed to love."

"How do you know I ever did?"

"Those letters, in Her Ladyship's novel, *Glenarvon*, are much in your own style, and rather better than she could write. Have you any objection to tell me candidly whether they are really your originals?"

"Yes! they are. But what of that? Is it not absurd to suppose that a woman, who was not quite a fool, could believe in such ridiculous, heartless nonsense? Would not you have laughed at such poetical stuff?"

"Certainly. Those letters would have done more to convince me of your perfect indifference, than even your silence and neglect. Nobody ever did or can impose upon me by a heartless love-letter. *Quand le cœur parle, adieu l'esprit.* It is, in fact, almost impossible to compose anything which has a resemblance to strong feeling, when one is addressing a person towards whom our heart is cold."

"I am glad we agree on one point. Now, with regard to my various errors, of which you have been pleased to make mention."

"I did not do so to wound or to vex"; interrupted I, "but you are too touchy and susceptible. I am surprised at what, when carried to excess, I conceive to be the defect of a little mind. However, much may be said in extenuation of your sensitiveness; because you are in ill-health, and may be blue-devilled, when you see things in such a sickly light, or suspect persons of meaning to insult your feelings, when they perhaps never once thought about you in their lives."

"You use me worse than anybody, and yet, touchy as I am, I really like you, because I feel the conviction that you would sacrifice your own interest to do me good: and, suspicious as you are pleased to describe me, I am convinced that there is nothing you could ever say or do to me, but I should take as I know it would be meant, in good part. You have perhaps the sort of plain understanding which would serve to make me better; but you could not live with me or endure much of my society. I am, in short, determined that you shall like me all my life, and I

know myself too well to believe that to be possible, were you to see me at all times."

"As you please. Remember I am always, while I live, your faithful friend, proud when you will employ me or invite me near you, yet submitting to your better judgment with philosophic cheerfulness, whenever you may desire my absence."

"I thank you very sincerely," said Lord Byron, pressing my hand with much friendly warmth.

"You must be ill or unhappy, when you are so violent and gloomy," I continued, "and, while your genius is delighting all the world, it is hard, and deeply I lament, that you do not enjoy such calm tranquil thoughts as I shall pray may yet be yours."

"Who shall console us for acute bodily anguish?" said Lord Byron, in a tone of wild and thrilling despondency. "But," added he hastily, "you are a dear, good-natured creature to waste the gay fleeting pleasures of this evening in listening to the despair of a wretch like me."

I pressed his hand to my heart because being masked, I could not kiss it.

"I seldom have intruded my wretchedness on others," said Lord Byron.

"A thousand thanks, my dear Lord Byron. You do, I know, feel sure of my heart. We are all more or less subject to bodily sufferings. Thank God, they will have an end."

"And what then?" inquired His Lordship.

"We will hope, at least, that bodily pain and anxiety shall cease with our lives. This, surely, is a reasonable hope. In the meantime, yours cannot be all made up of bitterness. You have enjoyed exquisite moments of triumphs, and you have written the *Corsair!*"

"True! I cannot deny that my sensations are sometimes enviable. You have already done me good, and you and I are now, I hope, sworn friends. Something has this day ruffled me beyond my stock of patience. I must leave you; but we shall meet again, and you will let me hear from you I hope. Or do you mean to forget me? I may not long continue in the same

country with you; but wherever I am, it will console me to know that I am remembered kindly by you."

"Do you wish to leave me now, then?" I asked.

"Yes."

"Thank you for being candid, and God bless you, dear Lord Byron," said I, this time raising up my mask, that I might press his hands to my lips.

"*Amuse-toi bien, mon enfant*," said Lord Byron, drawing away his hand from my mouth, to give me an affectionate kiss.

I saw no more of him for that evening; but I offered up a fervent, short, ejaculatory prayer to heaven, for this interesting young man's better health, and then joined the noisy merry throng in the adjoining rooms.

A party of high-bred young ladies, with whom I had danced before supper, came round me, and asked me if I was too tired for a quadrille. "But do, for heaven's sake, take off your mask, child: it really is such affectation! What are you afraid of? I am sure you cannot be so very ugly as to be ashamed of your face, with those bright hazel eyes, and all that fine hair!"

"Come," said another, "let me untie your ugly mask; we are all so tired of looking at the nasty simpering expression of it."

While I was defending my mask Fanny passed me, followed by Meyler, who was still tormenting her to tell him under what disguise he must look for me.

"There," said Fanny, "Harriette is among those ladies. There are not more than eight or ten of them, and I declare to you that I will not point out Harriette from the rest, say or do what you will." Meyler, in his anxiety to make us all speak to him, suffered Fanny to depart in peace. He did not once address me, but stood puzzling between a gipsy-girl and a flower-girl, till I was induced so far to take compassion on him, as to place my hand in that of the gipsy, making signs for her to tell my fortune, as though I had been representing a dumb woman.

Meyler examined my hand and nails attentively, and then called me by my name.

"I could swear to this hand anywhere; but how you have tormented me to-night," said Meyler.

The novelty of my dress seemed to make the impression on Meyler which a new woman might be expected to make on a man who, like him, was so fond of variety. He was quite in raptures, and refused to leave my side an instant during the remainder of the evening, lest any famous knight-errant should carry me off in a balloon.

At eight o'clock in the morning an excellent breakfast was served. It consisted of coffee, tea and chocolate; and, when I returned home at half-past nine o'clock, I heartily wished that the whole *fête* would begin again.

Very soon after this I left London for Paris, as I have already described, and I must now carry my readers back a few pages, to that part of my memoirs where I have stated that my finances required my return to London.

I passed the whole of the last day with Rosabella, who was in an agony of passionate grief, when at last I, with my English maid and *femme de chambre*, was seated in the carriage. She absolutely called after the post-boys, and insisted on once more pressing me in her arms. Anyone who had heard her sobs would have thought she was parting with a beloved husband for ever: and yet, when we afterwards got her adored Bonaparte into our power, Rosabella cut me dead, just as if I could possibly have helped it.

I arrived in town late in the evening, and was immediately visited by my constant swain, Lord Frederick Bentinck, whom I found at least as entertaining as usual. I visited my sister Fanny early the next morning, and presented her son and heir, George Woodcock who, strange to tell, had actually forgotten his English and answered everybody in French, to his mother's great surprise and amusement.

Amy continued with Paget, and insisted with much vulgarity on his appearing with her everywhere in public; particularly at the opera, because Mrs. Berkeley Paget frequented the theatre herself.

I forget whether the Prussian King and the Russian Emperor were in London, or only expected; but I remember well that London had never been so brilliantly gay in my time before, and the Opera House was perhaps never so crowded, in the memory of any person now living, as on the night that these two crowned heads, accompanied by our own beloved Sovereign, who was then Regent, appeared at this theatre. Thirty guineas were, I know, refused for a box on the upper tier.

Amy, with her usual selfishness, forced herself into my box, which was already crowded almost beyond endurance, because it exactly faced the royal one. No less than fifty people obtained permission to take a peep at the three reigning princes from my excellent position. Altogether, I had like to have been suffocated. A little before the curtain dropped, I contrived to secure a seat near the entrance to the upper room, called the round-room, which faces the Haymarket. There I waited patiently till the gay crowd should disperse, amusing myself by endeavouring to guess at the characters of those persons who were nearest me.

Lady Anne Wyndham was leaning against the crimson door in her most studied attitude: her swansdown tippet thrown back on purpose to display her bosom, while the same set soft smile she had worn for the last twenty years played on her lips, and might have played there unobserved till doomsday, but for her faithful solitary swain, Cicisbeo or lover, I know not which appellation he best deserved, my Lord Petersham, who was eagerly making his way through the crowd in his *outré costume d'Espagne*, in order to pay his respects to Her Ladyship. His address was most correctly elegant; his school, Lord Chesterfield, with less of pedantry, or the late Duc de Richelieu perhaps, without his depravity.

"I am quite distressed," said His Lordship, after performing his graceful bow of six years studying, "that I have been prevented joining you earlier. I am afraid you found the heat very oppressive to-night. Allow me to offer you these violets," presenting a small bouquet between his delicate finger and

thumb. "They are, I know, the flowers you prefer." Lady Anne became broad awake, if not animated by the attention of her admirer.

I now observed a very corpulent gentleman sailing towards us. He had a lady leaning on his right arm, and two ugly, tawny daughters on his left: all three seemed ready to expire under the pressure of heat and finery.

"La! papa, don't pull so," said the eldest daughter.

"Somebody has shoved the comb out of my head, I declare; and I have torn my dress," said the youngest.

"Why don't William stay with the girls?" said mamma. "I declare I am squeezed to death."

Beau Brummell, at this moment, passed immediately between Lord Petersham and this interesting family party. As the pressure prevented the possibility of advancing, the corpulent gentleman, after taking out his pocket-handkerchief and wiping his head and face, seemed about to address Beau Brummell, and I promised myself not a little amusement, from observing the very essence of vulgarity in close contact with the finest man in town.

"Warm work this, sir," said the corpulent gentleman to Brummell, who merely answered by a look of dismay, softened, however, by a glance at the muscular strength of his neighbour.

"Pray, sir," said the fat gentleman, speaking louder, "may I be bold to ask which of they two foreigners might be the Russian Emperor?"

"Sir?" said Brummell, shrugging up his shoulders, and turning up his eyes from Lord Petersham to the ceiling in utter despondency at observing no possible means of escape. The man of real high rank and breeding might here have been easily distinguished from the mere man of impudent pretensions. Lord Petersham good-naturedly condescended to answer for the beau.

"Thank you, sir," said the fat gentleman. "I thought so; and, do you know, I likes the look of him."

"Pa!" said the eldest daughter, anxious to be thought of

consequence, and having actually made a slight acquaintance with Lord Alvanly by accident, "here comes our friend Lord Alvanly."

Lord Alvanly, much amused at finding the Smiths in such society, affected great cordiality, and shaking them heartily by the hand, begged to have the honour of introducing Mr. and Mrs. Smith, also the two Misses Smith, to Lord Petersham and Mr. Brummell. On hearing the name of Brummell Mr. Smith, mistaking it for some acquaintance of his own, repeated the name to himself, "Brummell! Brummell!"

"I believe, sir," addressing the beau smirkingly, "I fancy, sir, I have had the pleasure of meeting you before? I am sure I have. You are the gentleman as sung such a good song at our club."

The well-taught muscles of Lord Petersham's face were nearly giving way, not only against all superfine Chesterfieldian rules, but common civility. Even Lady Anne's placid waxen smile was almost enlarging into a laugh, at the idea of Brummell singing a good song at Smith's club; but Lord Alvanly whispered gravely in Smith's ear, that he had no doubt it was the very same person, adding that Mr. Brummell did sing a remarkably good song; but was always shy at receiving compliments in public.

"Sir," said Smith, bowing to Brummell, "I shall be most happy to see you at my snug box at Clapham. All my family are fond of a good English song, and I will venture to say I can give you as good a bottle of port wine as any in England."

Brummell here forced his way through the crowd in a fit of desperation and disappeared

"That's a queer chap!" said Smith, much offended; "but, good Lord, who have we got here? Crazy Jane?"

The personage who thus excited his surprise was Lady Owen, who came sailing towards them under the escort of a young barrister, whose broad unmeaning face some ladies have been pleased to call handsome. A profusion of full-grown artificial wheat was scattered over her head in grotesque confusion. Several dark ringlets were suffered to fall loosely

over her neck and shoulders, and the rest was confined by immense red roses, indigenous, probably, to Brobdingnag or Patagonia, or some other climate where everything is gigantic. She did not appear to affect youth, but voluptuousness; rolling her eyes in affectation of libertinism, such as she had no inclination to indulge, yet seemed as anxious to excite, as if it had been her natural vocation. Indeed that was the character of her countenance, which could have expressed no other feeling even at her best beloved's funeral!

Miss Smith now addressed a young man with stiff dark whiskers by the appellation of brother, who, though a better grammarian, appeared to be as much more radically vulgar than his father, as he was presuming and self-sufficient.

"Laws! William," said his youngest sister, "Pa has had a nice job with us three women."

"We are very much obliged to you, indeed," the eldest Miss Smith observed

"I told you before," said the pompous youth, pulling up his neck-cloth without looking at his sisters, "I have frequently informed you that brothers attending their sisters in public is not at all the correct thing, neither is this the proper spot to wait in."

"Don't tell me your nonsense about the proper spot," said old Smith, "I have almost had the breath shoved out of my body to-night."

"Pray William," said his mother, "why do you come to the hoppera in that hodious round 'at, after giving such a price for a three-cornered one?"

"If you inquire, Madam," answered William, with grave contempt, "you will learn that a round hat is the correct thing at this time of the year."

Hearing the clock strike three, I immediately fancied myself half dead with fatigue, and hurried to my carriage as fast as the crowd, which still continued, would permit me.

Meyler, as I had been informed, while at Paris was consoling himself with a Mrs. Stonyer, as she was called, because she

lived with Mr. Stonyer. However, I saw him at the opera looking so very pale and ill that my heart relented, and I wrote to inquire after him, and the next day he called upon me. I asked him if he was much in love with his new acquaintance.

"Not at all," said Meyler; "but, Stonyer being such a fool, there was no resisting the amusement of making him a cuckold. How do you think I manage it at Melton?"

"How should I know?'

"Why we all go out hunting together and, when I have rode a few miles, I wink at the rest and fall down from my horse, or affect to hurt my ankle. I then express my vexation at being obliged to return home to nurse myself. Stonyer condoles with and offers to accompany me. I insist on his remaining to enjoy the fine sport of the day, and I go back to his mistress. However," continued Meyler, "she got jealous and fond of me latterly, which disgusted me, and I cut her. She then so far lost sight of common prudence as to send her good man Stonyer after me."

"My Mary Ann," or "my Betsy," or whatever her name was, which I have forgotten, "wishes, of all things to see you, if you please," would he say to Meyler, and when Meyler rudely refused to obey the fair lady's summons, Stonyer would remark to some of his Melton friends in a whisper, that, being a delicate subject, he could not well consult Mrs. Stonyer concerning Meyler's rudeness in being sulky and refusing to obey her invitation: but he was himself pretty shrewd and could guess how the affair stood. He was afraid his friend Meyler had presumed to take some slight liberty with Mrs. Stonyer, which must have seriously alarmed her, and which she must have resented, perhaps so harshly as to wound Meyler's pride in a way not to be overcome.

"Stonyer," Fred Bentinck would sometimes say to me, "Stonyer is like a man in a play; a man quite below par. I never heard such a fool off the stage. He often calls me aside with much mystery and, having got me into a corner, whispers in my ear that he is afraid we shall have a wet season."

Somewhere about this time John Mills of the Guards insisted on falling in love with me, merely to prove himself a fashionable man. Being a friend of Meyler's, I could not easily avoid making his acquaintance. He was rather well informed: but a stiff, bad imitator of Meyler's gentlemanly carriage and manner: a sort of man who would rather have died than not been a member of White's club, at the door of which he always wished his tilbury and neat groom to be found, between the hours of four and five. From that he went into Hyde Park, for such was the fashion, and he had a chance of meeting Brummell and Meyler there. The former was just now getting into disgrace. The story was this

Brummell, Alvanly, and Worcester agreed to raise thirty thousand pounds on their joint securities. Brummell having made Worcester believe that he was at least competent to pay the interest of the debt, the money was raised, and the weight of the debt was expected to fall on the Duke of Beaufort, who, after strict inquiry, ascertained that Brummell was deeply involved and without even the most remote prospect of ever possessing a single guinea. When Meyler heard this he became furious, both on his friend Worcester's account and his own, declaring that Brummell had borrowed seven thousand pounds from him, which he had lent in the fullest conviction that Brummell was a man of honour.

I asked Meyler how he could be so very stupid as to have been deceived, even for an instant, about Brummell.

"Why, did not everybody think so?"

"Certainly not. Brummell was pretty generally known for a man destitute of feeling or principle; but he looked well at an assembly, and was the fashion."

"I would forgive him the seven thousand pounds he has robbed me of; but, on Worcester's account, I shall expose him to-morrow at White's."

"Why not let Worcester fight his own battles?"

"That is just what, for the Duchess of Beaufort's sake, I wish to prevent."

"I think you may trust Worcester, who has no sort of inclination to fight Brummell nor anybody else."

"No matter. Brummell I will certainly expose; because he has basely obtained a sum of money from my friend."

"So has Lord Alvanly."

"But then, Lord Alvanly may at least contrive to pay the interest; therefore it was not so complete a fraud. Nevertheless, I hold it my duty, as an independent gentleman, never to give my countenance nor society to a man who has done a dishonourable action. I shall therefore cut Lord Alvanly wherever I meet him, notwithstanding no man delights more in his amusing qualities than I do; but, believing that society would be much improved by general firmness of this kind, no power on earth should prevail on me to swerve from this my fixed determination."

Meyler strictly adhered to this resolution to the day of his death. Even when he met Lord Alvanly in the Duchess of Beaufort's box, or no matter where, he never spoke to him again. Alvanly used to rail at Meyler for this, as might naturally be expected, calling him a d——d methodistical grocer, etc.

The little sugar-baker kept his promise of exposing Mr. Brummell at White's Club, where he placed himself the following morning for the sole purpose of saying to every man who entered, that Mr. Brummell's late conduct both towards the Marquis of Worcester and himself, had been such as rendered him a disgrace to society, and most unfit to remain a member of that club. Tom Raikes, I believe it was, who acquainted Brummell the next day of this glowing panegyric on his character

Brummell addressed a few lines to Meyler, begging to be informed if such had really and truly been the expressions made use of.

Meyler answered that not only he had used expressions, but that he further proposed returning to the club on the following day, for the sole purpose of repeating them between the hours of two and four, to anybody who might happen to be present,

and, if Mr. Brummell had anything to say to him in return, he would be sure to find him at White's during that particular time.

Brummell never made his appearance in London after the receipt of this letter, which gained Meyler the nickname of the dandy-killer. Since then, dandies have gone out of fashion.

Brummell, finding himself on his last legs, made the best of his way to about a dozen of his former acquaintances, from most of whom he had already contrived to obtain large sums of money

"Play has been the ruin of me," said he to each of them in turn. "I now throw myself on your compassion, being in a wretched plight; for I have been led into such scrapes, as oblige me to leave London at a minute's notice, and I have not a guinea to pay post horses."

Many of them gave him a fifty-pound note; so did John Mills I believe; but first, he expostulated with the beau, and asked him what excuse he could offer for having already obtained such large sums from one who knew so little of him.

"Why," said Brummell to several of these half-and-half sort of gentry, "have not I called you Dick, Tom, and John, you rogues? And was not that worth all the money to you? But for this, do you fancy or flatter yourselves that you would ever have been seen picking your teeth in Lady Foley's box, or the Duchess of Rutland's? John Mills above all!"

Brummell was soon after this established in Calais, and half the world went to see him, as though he had been a lion. I determined to do so too on my return to Paris, where I promised to join my mother as soon as I had settled the business which had brought me to England. In the interval, I passed much of my time with Fanny, who now saw a good deal of Lord Bective. Her health continued much as usual.

CHAPTER XXIV

Lord Byron paid me frequent visits; but I really cannot recollect whether it was just at this period or later in that year or the next. No matter; Voltaire says somewhere that provided there was a battle, it does not signify when it took place. His Lordship's manner was always natural, sometimes very pleasant; but generally egotistical. He would listen to one's conversation just as long as he was entertained by it and no longer. However, he very good-naturedly permitted one to grow tired of him in the like manner, which was more than many great men could pardon. Once he talked with me on religion till I grew weary and absent. He then fixed his expressive eyes keenly on my face for an instant, as if to read my thoughts before he ventured to proceed, and complacently changed the subject, observing, "I have tired you to death on religion. Let us talk of the gay world, men and women! Perhaps you may find me less tiresome."

"You are never tiresome on any subject; but I was vexed, and tired of the vain attempts I have been making to change such opinions as seem to engender black melancholy, in the mind of a man superior and amiable, as you would be with a happier temper. It was indeed the very height of vanity and folly in me, to have hoped for an instant that anything I could say would influence you."

"The strong proof that you have affected me by much which you have been saying, is the energy and nerve with which I have been striving to refute your arguments during the last half-hour. Do you believe I should have taken all this trouble, if you had said nothing to strike me or throw new lights on a subject which is often tormenting me?"

"Why not make up our minds that we know nothing, and then, while we quietly follow the dictates of our own consciences, hope the best?"

"Very comfortable doctrine, certainly," said Lord Byron: "but if thoughts and wishes, boundless as the heavens, will force themselves on a soaring inquisitive mind almost to madness, while shame for its own littleness, and dread of a future which cannot be understood or avoided, contribute to disgust me with my present state, and make me the wretch of impulse which you and all must hate——?"

Lord Byron uttered these words in such a tremendous, loud voice, that his strength and feelings were suddenly exhausted, and his countenance changed to the ashy paleness of death as he threw his head against the back of the sofa whereon he was sitting. Common-place words of sympathy and condolence I conceived must be thrown away on any person, at a moment when the feelings were so highly wrought. I therefore silently placing myself by his side imprinted a kiss on his hand. He was in the act of withdrawing it almost furiously; but I fixed my eyes upon his face, and their expression must have pleased him; for he immediately replaced his hand in mine, which he pressed very affectionately. I reclined my head on his shoulder, in order to talk to him with less formality.

"It is the over-excitement of a too active mind which operates thus upon our nerves," said I, trying to identify myself with his mental sufferings. "It would surely soothe us, could we in such moments recline on the fresh grass by the side of a clear brook, and amuse ourselves in luxurious indolence watching the pebbles, as we threw them into the water, until the monotony of this lazy occupation should put us to sleep, when we might happen to dream of infinite space, and freedom, and joy, with no sad void left aching in the breast."

Lord Byron smiled on me with the earnest warmth which a parent would show towards a child, in reward for its attempts to please and amuse him.

"One day or other such a dream as this shall be eternal"; I

continued, and, without giving him time to argue on the subject I drew his attention, as if by accident, to some of the most striking and animated beauties of his *Corsair*, just as they had really impressed me. Where is the author who can be indifferent to the genuine unhackneyed praise bestowed on his own composition?

Lord Byron gradually recovered his serenity, and, before we separated, we had mutually indulged in many a hearty laugh at the expense of false prudes: ladies who put their heads into their pillows, while affecting to cry nay, and, at the same time, *elles se prêtent à la circonstance*. But never mind what we laughed at, or how absurd our conversation, so that poor dear Lord Byron got rid of his sombre melancholy.

We met on various occasions previously to his separation from his wife; and His Lordship made me very happy one day, by assuring me that there was a soothing kind of softness in my temper and disposition, which, joined to much playful humour, had more than once saved him from feelings nearly allied to madness.

Speaking one day of the severe critique published by the Edinburgh reviewers on his first work, entitled *Hours of Idleness*, I mentioned my surprise at His Lordship having been so irritated and annoyed by it.

"I can easily conceive a stupid, prosing poet, who felt his own inferiority and despaired of writing anything better, becoming furious at such absurd scurrility; but I should have expected you to have read it without feeling your temper ruffled; though, in fact, your poetry was perhaps a little lame: but the satire directed against it became pointless, from its unnatural severity."

"And where did you ever see a stupid, prosing poet, who did feel his own inferiority?" asked Lord Byron. "As a boy, I certainly had a strong suspicion that I possessed unusual abilities; but I was by no means convinced of it: and I often felt myself very deficient in things which it was incumbent on any man to know. I offered my work to the public in fear and

trembling; for I knew but very little of the world, and was foolishly sensitive."

Speaking of vanity some time afterwards, Lord Byron remarked, laughingly, that he was tired of praise as Lord Byron, because it now became a thing of course; but still he felt at all times proud and grateful, when any stranger took him for a very fine fellow.

"I, one day," he continued, "determined to try what effect I could produce on an untaught servant-maid. She was very pretty and not, I think, deficient in natural abilities, though it is really very good of me to say so; for she could not endure me! I made myself very smart too at our second meeting, and she became a little more reconciled to me before I left England. However, she certainly was much more in love with a young shopkeeper in the neighbourhood. You made my vanity ample amends: for I am too proud of your spontaneous good opinion, to suffer myself to doubt the truth of your former assurance, upon your word and honour, that you did not know me when you addressed me at the masquerade."

Lord Ebrington came to see me in town on his return from Italy, and declared me so delightful that I reminded him of *les beaux vieux temps passés*. I nevertheless went back to Paris, without doing anything with the Duke of Beaufort respecting my annuity.

I cannot help thinking that many persons are governed rather by worldly than by moral principles, in their determination to praise everybody they know without rhyme or reason: for I have been acquainted with many, to whom mild Christian charity was a stranger, who courted popularity by indiscriminate praise of the good and of the bad. Coldness of heart renders all this easy and natural.

The good-natured man, says some great writer or other, is generally without benevolence or any other virtue, than such as indolence and insensibility confer. Now, the selfsame energy and warmth of heart, which creates enthusiastic admiration of the virtuous and amiable, excites the strongest feelings of

resentment against those who are capable of meanness or dishonour

Few were, I believe, unacquainted with the real character of Beau Brummell, among those who courted, praised, sought and copied him. The prudence of such conduct can no more be doubted, in my humble opinion, than its injustice towards the truly amiable. Although for my part I never affected friendship for Mr. Brummell, either in his day of triumph or since his disgrace, yet curiosity induced me to inquire about him as I passed through Calais.

"*C'était un homme charmant*" his French language-master informed me. "*Qu'il avait un ton parfait; que c'était aussi étonnant qu'heureux qu'il n'eut jamais appris à parler Français, en Angleterre.*"

I made the beau a hasty visit, just as the horses were being put to my carriage. My inquiry, "*Si Monsieur Brummell était visible?*" was answered by his valet, just such a valet as one would have given the beau in the acme of his glory, *bien poudré, bien cérémonieux, et bien mis*, "*que Monsieur faisait sa barbe.*"

"*Pardon,*" added the valet, seeing me about to leave my card, "*mais Monsieur reçoit, en faisant la barbe, toujours. Monsieur est à sa seconde toilette, actuellement.*"

I found the beau *en robe de chambre de Florence*, and, if one might judge from his increased embonpoint and freshness, his disgrace had not seriously affected him. He touched lightly on this subject in the course of our conversation, *faisant toujours la barbe, avec une grace toute particulière, et le moindre petit rasoir que je n'eus jamais vu.*

"Play," he said, "had been the ruin of them all."

"Whom do you include in your all?"

He told me there had been a rot in White's club.

"I have heard all about your late tricks in London," said I.

Brummell laughed, and told me that in Calais he sought only French society; because it was his decided opinion that nothing could be more ridiculous than the idea of a man going to the

continent, whether from necessity or choice, merely to associate with Englishmen.

I asked him if he did not find Calais a very melancholy residence.

"No," answered Brummell, "not at all. I draw, read, study French, and——"

"Play with that dirty French dog,"interrupted I.

"*Finissez donc, Louis*," said he laughing, and encouraging the animal to play tricks, leap on his *robe de chambre de Florence*, and make a noise. Then, turning to me, "There are some pretty French actresses at Paris. I had such a sweet green shoe here just now. In short," added Brummell, "I have never been in any place in my life, where I could not amuse myself."

Brummell's table was covered with seals, chains, snuff-boxes and watches: presents, as he said, from Lady Jersey and various other ladies of high rank.

The only talent I could ever discover in this beau was that of having well-fashioned the character of a gentleman, and proved himself a tolerably good actor; yet, to a nice observer, a certain impenetrable, unnatural stiffness of manner proved him but nature's journeyman after all; but then his wig—his new French wig was nature itself.

From what I had heard of the hero's fall, I fully expected to have found him reclined on a couch worn down to a skeleton, and with these lines of the poor Cardinal Wolsey, or the like of them, ever and anon in his mouth:

> Go get thee from me!
> I am poor fallen man.
> No sun shall ever usher forth mine honours,
> Or gild again the noble hoofs that waited
> Upon my smiles.

Quite the contrary however was Brummell, who, had he not covered his bald pate with the said model of a wig, would have looked just as usual.

At Paris, I found most of my friends just as I had left them.

Rosabella was delighted to see me. Nugent's old blue remise was still kept in constant motion, rattling about the dirty streets of Paris after his favourite women, and Amy's eyes still rolled and ogled her ugly Swiss banker, Monsieur Grefule, who being still cruel, my pen was employed to melt his Swiss heart; but one might as well have attempted to thaw a Swiss mountain-cape of ice.

I think it was during this visit of mine to Paris, that I happened to be in want of money, an exigency by no means unusual with me; and, having considered who was most likely to give it me, after vainly applying to Argyle I fixed on Lord Byron, who was at that time in Italy: and I addressed him as follows:

Paris, 15th March.

My Dear Lord Byron,

I hate to ask you for money, because you ought not to pay anybody: not even turnpike men, postmen nor tax-gathering men: for we are all paid tenfold by your delicious verses, even if we had claims on you, and I have none. However, I only require a little present aid, and that I am sure you will not refuse me, as you once refused to make my acquaintance because you held me too cheap. At the same time, pray write me word that you are tolerably happy. I hope you believe in the very strong interest I take, and always shall take, in your welfare: so I need not prose about it. God bless you, my dear Lord Byron.

H. W.

By return of post, I received the following answer:

Ravenna, March 30th.

I have just received your letter, dated 15th instant, and will send you fifty pounds, if you will inform me how I can remit that sum; for I have no correspondence with Paris of any kind; my letters of credit being for Italy; but perhaps you can get someone to cash you a bill for fifty pounds on me, which I would honour, or you can give me a safe direction for the remission of a bill to that amount. Address to me at Ravenna, not Venice.

With regard to my refusal, some years ago, to comply with a very different request of yours, you mistook, or chose to mistake the motive: it was not that "I held you much too cheap" as you say, but that my compliance with your request to visit you, would just then have been a great wrong to another person: and, whatever you may have heard, or may believe, I have ever acted with good faith in things even where it is rarely observed, as long as good faith is kept with me. I told you afterwards that I had no wish to hurt your self-love, and I tell you so again, when you will be more disposed to believe me.

In answer to your wish that I shall tell you if I was "happy", perhaps it would be a folly in any human being to say so of themselves, particularly a man who has had to pass through the sort of things which I have encountered; but I can at least say that I am not miserable, and am perhaps more tranquil than ever I was in England.

You can answer as soon as you please: and believe me

Yours, etc.,

BYRON.

P.S.—Send me a banker's or merchant's address, or any person's in your confidence, and I will get Langle, my banker at Bologna, to remit you the sum I have mentioned.

It is not a very magnificent one; but it is all I can spare just now.

Answer:

Paris, 30 Rue de la Paix.

Ten thousand thanks, dear Lord Byron, for your prompt compliance with my request. You had better send the money to me here and I shall get it safe. I am very glad to learn that you are more tranquil. For my part, I never aspired to being your companion, and should be quite enough puffed up with pride, were I permitted to be your housekeeper, attend to your morning cup of chocolate, damn your nightcap, comb your dog, and see that your linen and beds are well aired, and, supposing all these things were duly and properly attended to, perhaps you might, one day or other in the course of a season, desire me to put on my clean bib and

apron and seat myself by your side, while you condescended to read me in your beautiful voice your last new poem!

Apropos! *I travelled with a man lately who had just left you. I forget his name; a sort of a lawyer as I guessed, because he would talk about the "parties" every few minutes. No! he could not be quite so bad as that neither. I don't know what he was; but he had not the least mite of skin on his long, thin, straight nose. That had been all entirely burnt off, he said, while he was enjoying the charms of your delightful society at Venice. Heaven defend me from such a nose, however poetically bestowed upon me! Don Juan kept me up the whole of last night. I will not attempt to describe its beauties, as they struck and delighted me; because that would be at the expense of another night's rest: and, what can I say to you, who know well that you are the first poet of this, I am inclined to think of any, age? And, being this, as well as young and beautiful, why condescend to resent our sins against you? A common man might as well be angry with a wasp, as Lord Byron with a common man, when he is waspish towards him, and let me ask you what harm the commandments ever did you or those who believe in them, since they teach nought but virtue. And what catchpenny ballad writer could not write a parody on them as you have done?* Souviens-toi comme tu es noble, et ne te mêle point de tout cela. *Let our religion alone, till you can furnish us with a more perfect creed. Till then, neither you nor Voltaire will ever enlighten the world by laughing at it.*

It would serve me right, were you to refuse to send me what you promised after my presumption in writing you this sermon. However, I must be frank and take my chance, and, if you really wish to convince me you bear no malice nor hatred in your heart, tell me something about yourself; and do pray try and write a little better, for I never saw such a vile hand as yours has become. Was it never a little more decent? True, a great man is permitted to write worse than ordinary people; mais votre écriture passe la permission. *Anyone, casting a hasty glance at one of your effusions, would mistake it for a washer-woman's laboured scrawl, or a long dirty ditty from some poor soul just married, who humbly*

begs the favour of a little mangling from the neighbouring nobility, gentry and others! Look to it, man! Are there no writing-masters at Ravenna? Cannot you write straight at least? Dean Swift would have taken you "for a lady of England!"

God bless you, you beautiful little ill-tempered, delightful creature, and make you as happy as I wish you to be.

HARRIETTE.

Can I forward you a bundle of pens, or anything?

Answer:

Ravenna, May 15th.

I enclose a bill for a thousand francs, a good deal short of fifty pounds; but I will remit the rest by the very first opportunity. Owing to the little correspondence between Langle, the Bologna banker, I have had more difficulty in arranging the remittance of this paltry sum, than if it had been as many hundreds to be paid on the spot. Excuse all this, also the badness of my handwriting, which you find fault with and which was once better; but, like everything else, it has suffered from late hours and irregular habits.

The Italian pens, ink and paper are also two centuries behind the like articles in other countries.

Yours very truly and affectionately,

BYRON.

I should have written more at length, in reply to some parts of your letter; but I am at "this present writing" in a scrape (not a pecuniary one, but personal, about one of your ambrosial sex), which may probably end this very evening seriously. Don't be frightened. The Italians don't fight: they stab a little now and then; but it is not that, it is a divorce and separation; and, as the aggrieved person is a rich noble and old, and has had a fit of discovery against his moiety, who is only twenty years old, matters look menacing.

I must also get on horseback this minute, as I keep a friend waiting.

Address to me at Ravenna as usual.

Lord Byron wrote me many letters at different times; but I have lost or mislaid them all, except those which I have herein given, and can show to anyone who may be pleased to question their being really originals.

. . . . . .

Here's a disaster—a multiplicity of disasters in short, as Lady Berwick said one day, when the compound evils fell upon her. First, Peacock did not send her shoes home. Secondly, Lord Berwick threw a large, hot leg of mutton at his well-powdered footman's head. I will tell you why: the stupid cook insisted on serving it up, unadorned by the smart piece of writing-paper which is usually wrapped round the shank-bone. His Lordship had expostulated so often that, this time, he hoped to imprint the fact more strongly on the memory by dousing the untouched, greasy joint against his lacquey's brain. Now Sophia, it so chanced, was fond of a slice of mutton. Thirdly, that little man in St. James's Street, who sells box-combs, I forget his name, cut her hair at least an inch too short on the forehead. Fourthly, Sophia could not match the silk she wanted to finish a purse she happened to be netting for her handsome harp-master, Boscha of —— notoriety.

"One thing coming upon another," said Sophia, turning up her eyes as she sat with her feet on the fender; "one thing coming upon another, I feel I shall go mad." But, heavy as were Her Ladyship's afflictions, they cannot reasonably be named in the same day with the tragic misadventures which have been lately heaped on my poor little devoted shoulders.

I had proceeded nearly thus far with these my most valuable memoirs, and nearly thus much had been kindly forwarded by the late, good-natured, obliging ambassador, Sir Charles Stuart.

Hélas! les voila passes, ces jours de fêtes! Sir Charles is sent to India, and his place supplied by that selfsame beau whom I one Sunday trotted up to Marylebone Fields in the dog-days, and did not order him home again till he was expiring with fatigue and perspiration. It just now occurs to me that I styled him

Lord George, instead of Lord Granville Leveson Gower, an error which I hasten to correct and in all humility atone for: but it really is difficult to bear in mind the names of those who do not excite in us the least interest. Now that the case is altered, my readers perceive how readily I correct myself, having addressed His Lordship to this effect:

My acquaintance with your Lordship is very slight, since we have met but once in our lives, and that was a long while ago. Nevertheless, I hope you will prevent my feeling the loss of my late kind friend, whom everybody likes, as far as permitting me to forward my letters in the bag.

You will thus, my Lord, serve me just now most positively and effectually, for which condescending kindness I shall ever remain your Lordship's obliged and most obedient servant,

H. Wilson.

Lord Granville sent me a stiff formal note, which I have neither time nor inclination to look for, stating his regrets that, owing to certain regulations at the Foreign Office, he was compelled to refuse my request.

To which I replied:

My Lord,

I was looking about for a fool to fill up my book, and you are just arrived in Paris in time to take the place, for which I am indebted to you.

Yours obliged and obediently,

H. W.

In the following week, this most upright Plenipo's conscience growing slack, he slackened the strings of the bag so far as to admit the private correspondence of an acquaintance of mine, whose name he may learn whenever he thinks it worth his while to apply for it to me, who am his near neighbour.

To proceed with my disasters: the next was a pressing letter from Stockdale, handed to me by bag, declaring that he must have the rest of my memoirs, because folks began to think

it was all a hoax, as Liston or some other funny fellow says. *Que faire?* Having, by some wonderful chance or providence, contrived to scrape together two hundred francs, I determined to cross the Channel once more; for I hate to break my word.

Arrived at Mr. Stockdale's house, "willa" I would call it were it at all cockneyish, I handed him over, as a plenipo-pacificator, the chief part of my delectable memoirs. I conceived that my disasters were now completely at an end, and I looked forwards to a rich harvest, with unbounded applause.

Unfortunately, Stockdale, in a courteous fit, acquainted the immortal Wellington that I was about to publish part of his private life, under the impression, of course, that every act which relates to so great a hero must be interesting.

Will it ever be believed? His Grace, in the meek humility of his heart, has written to menace a prosecution if such trash be published. What trash, my dear Wellington? Now, I will admit, for an instant, and it is really very good of me, that you are an excellent judge of literature, and could decide on the merits or demerits of a work with better taste and judgment than the first of Edinburgh reviewers. Still, in order to pronounce it trash, we should fancy that even Wellington himself must throw a hasty glance on one of its pages at least. Quite the contrary. Wellington knows himself to be the subject, and therefore wisely prejudges the book trash one fortnight before it sees the light! So far so good! But when my own Wellington, who has sighed over me and groaned over me by the hour, talked of my wonderful beauty, ran after me, bribed Mrs. Porter over and over again, after I refused to listen to her overtures, only for a single smile from his beautiful Harriette! Did he not kneel? And was I not the object of his first, his most ardent wishes, on his arrival from Spain? Only it was such a pity that Argyle got to my house first. No matter! Though Argyle was not his rose, he had dwelled with it; therefore, what could my tender swain Wellington do better than stand in the gutter at two in the morning, pouring forth his

amorous wishes in the pouring rain, in strains replete with the most heartrending grief, to the favoured and fortunate lover who had supplanted him, as Stockdale has indulged me by getting so inimitably delineated. When, I say, this faithful lover, whose love survived six winters, six frosts, six chilling, nay, killing frosts, when Wellington sends the ungentle hint to my publisher, of hanging me, beautiful, adored and adorable me, on whom he had so often hung! *Alors je pends la téte!* Is it thus he would immortalise me?

I do not mean to say that Wellington threatened to hang me, in so many words: but honestly, it was something to say the least, not very unlike it: viz., it assumed the questionable shape of—— The prosecution might take a different turn from the circumstance of my having written to him, stating that I would certainly publish some anecdotes from real life, to try to get paid for them, in case my tender lover refused me some small assistance to procure a little bread and cheese or so. Of course, it could never enter the brain of anyone, save that of stupidity personified, to conceive that so great a man as Wellington ever did anything whatever of which he was the least ashamed or minded my publishing. Nevertheless, since he has threatened to bring forward my soft epistles, in which I remember I wrote that old frights like himself, who could not be contented with amiable wives, but must run about to old procuresses, bribing them to decoy young girls who are living in perfect retirement in Duke's Row, Somerstown, and not dreaming of harm, ought to pay us for the sacrifice they tempt us to make, as well as for our secrecy. However, all I entreat of my late tenderly enamoured wooer is, that he forthwith fulfil his threat and produce these said letters in court: and, lest a small trifle of hanging should be the result, but whether of him or me is yet to be seen, I'll e'en make my will, and so good-bye to ye, old Bombastes Furioso.

Yet I scarcely know how to take leave of the subject, it affects me so deeply! I should not have been half so much afraid of hanging, only I was subpœnaed on a trial at the Old Bailey a short time ago, as witness against a poor girl who stole a watch

out of my house. She acknowledged the fact, and was honourably acquitted!

"Och! the divel fly away wid all the world!" shrieked out my Irish cook, a widow who had just lost her husband. "Sure my darlink's watch has been stolen out of the kitchen."

She came flying into my room when I was ill in bed, and frightened me half out of my wits.

"Nonsense!" said I. "Who could steal your watch, think you?"

"Och! Don't bother me now. Sure it was the last thing my own darlink husband clapped his two good-looking eyes upon, before he died, and I'll murder every mother's son of you, but I'll have my watch!"

"For God's sake look for your watch, you provoking, impertinent creature, and don't stand there making a noise in my ears. Who on earth could steal your watch?"

"Oh! by the Almighty God, it was hanging on a nail of the kitchen-shelf half an hour ago, when I went out just to buy some petaties for my own dinner."

"Why, not a soul has been here during your absence, except a very interesting young woman, who did not appear to be more than seventeen years of age. She has left her direction, as she wanted to be my housemaid. I desired her to let herself out, and to be sure to shut the street door after her. On her head she wore a straw bonnet with green ribbons; but my room was rather dark, and that was all I noticed of her. I scarcely think I should know her again."

My Irish cook raved, roared, stormed, and bellowed along the streets, on her way to a magistrate, from whom having obtained a warrant, she passed three whole days in wandering about London to look for young women with ribbons on their bonnets. Of these she contrived to coax three or four to walk with her to my house; but, alas! they did not include the person she wanted. At last she chanced to meet with a young female about seventeen years of age, who blushed deeply when she mentioned to her having been cruelly robbed of a watch.

Without hesitation she seized her by the arm, and observing how the young woman trembled, under a promise of pardon prevailed on her to confess the theft, and immediately had her taken into custody. Next day two officers made me accompany them to Marlborough Street public office. The girl was fully committed for trial and sent to Newgate, where I visited her, and expressed my astonishment that so young a girl could commit so daring a robbery. Her plea was, that a soldier had seduced her, she was pregnant by him, and he loved her no longer. In short, her only chance of being admitted to visit him rested in her having money to give him. Love had made her so desperate, that she stole my Irish woman's watch on her way downstairs, merely to ensure one more interview with her faithless lover.

Oh this love! this love!

For more than a week I was shut up all day long in the witness box at the Old Bailey. The first evening, only petty offences were tried. Two men for pig-stealing, a gentleman for stealing a piece of pickled pork, and concealing it about the lower parts of his person. This, notwithstanding it was a fundamental error, was pardoned, and excited an expression of loud applause from the gallery auditors. The judge reprimanded the noisy throng with proper dignity, assuring them that, if this indecent conduct was repeated, they should be severely punished.

The next morning I saw three men condemned to be hanged. The same judge sat upon the bench. These dreadful scenes were new to me, and I was overpowered with a violent hysterical affection, for which I expected seven years transportation at least; but the judge, it should seem, preferred the sound of sobs and tears to applause, from mere habit, for he took no sort of notice of me. I forget his name. He was a very old man, and spoke as if he took much snuff. I know not whether he or Denman is most respected: but this I know, that, for my own part, next to not being hanged at all, *plait à M. Wellington*, I should like Denman to pronounce sentence upon me: so pleasing a voice and so persuasive manner I never witnessed, and the

most placid, benevolent countenance! No one could see him on the bench, and not feel the comfortable conviction of his earnest wish to save the unfortunates, if it were consistent with his duty. Now I could not help fancying that the learned and snuffy judge was a little more convinced of the wholesomeness and convenience of hanging, than either Denman or our good King George.

There was a handsome young housebreaker, whose favourable witness was his sweetheart. The judge, of course, declared that such evidence was good for nothing. However, at the request of the housebreaker's counsel, she was allowed to speak, although I don't think the oath was administered to her.

"Are you a girl of the town?" asked the judge, to begin with.

The lady honestly owned she was, and, being further questioned by my lord judge, she gave an account of her lover being taken out of her room by two police officers.

"And did they not take you too?"

"No, my Lord."

"A pity!'

I observed Andrews among the counsellors, with his beak-nose, looking quite as wise and learned as when he came forth a few years ago in defence of Mrs. Bertram, formerly Mrs. Kent. This gentleman stared at me with disgusting persevering effrontery. He seemed to me to be eternally labouring for distinction, from his discovery of loopholes and knotty points in the law; but his attempts were invariably unsuccessful. When it shall please the mighty Wellington to try to hang me, Andrews certainly shall not plead in my behalf, to show cause why I should not have such a rise in the world. I can get an old woman in petticoats to prose for me for half the money!

Young Law, Lord Ellenborough's son, was a very smart, fine, young gentleman; and his impatience of temper passed, I dare say occasionally, for quickness. His wig was never straight on his head. I rather fancy he liked to show his own good head of hair under it. He was constantly explaining to the witnesses

what the snuffy judge said to them, from very impatience, and then again he would explain to my lud on the bench the blunders and mistakes of witnesses.

Young Law cross-questioned an old woman in an antique costume.

"When you first beheld the deceased did you, from your own observation, conceive him to be in a dying state?"

"He said he was very bad, sir."

"I do not ask you what he said, my good woman. I want to know what your own opinion of his health was."

"Why, Lord, sir, everybody said he was in a bad way: upon my word they did."

"Come, come! This won't do, upon your word! What's upon your word to do with it? Don't you know you are on your oath? What—was—your—own—opinion, as to the man's state of health?"

"Oh law!" said the witness, and then paused. I thought, really, that she was calling him by his name. "Oh law! I think he must have been but poorly! very so so, indeed."

"My Lud," said young Law, tossing up his little head with such uncontrollable impatience towards the bench, as to shake out a cloud of powder from his wig, "my Lud, I am no match for this woman. She had better be examined by someone more competent."

The good woman was desired to leave the witness-box.

I was in a rage with Phillip's brogue; because I should otherwise have been so delighted with him. People say that a brogue is expressive; but I think a little goes a great way.

When the learned judge began to sum up the evidence, I thought we never should have done with it. I could not help naming him slow and sure, from what I observed of him.

"Mary Allen states that—(holding the paper close to his eyes) —Mary Allen states—she—states—she—no—she states—nothing—but she—ah—no! Mary Allen states, that—ah! right! that she knew the prisoner—when—when—when—Mary Allen states, that she knew the prisoner when he lodged—yes—

Mary Allen knew the prisoner, when he—when he—when he—when he——"

"My Lud!" said young Law, popping up his little powdered head again, in a high fever of desperate impatience—"My Lud! shall I order candles?"

Good-bye, judge snuffy. Heaven knows how soon you and I may meet again, thanks to the great Wellington. It is a nervous subject to me, yet I cannot help reverting to it. However, let us change it and proceed with my memoirs.

There is surely something harsh and unmanly in threatening a woman with any kind of law or prosecution, unless she were to do something much worse than telling the truth: and there is a double want of gallantry in threatening a fair lady, whose favours have been earnestly courted! *N'est-ce pas?*

The man who lays his hand on a woman, save in the way of kindness, is a monster, whom it were gross flattery to call coward.

Now what would this excellent author say to Mr. Jack Ketch's hand being laid on one, and that not quite in the way of kindness either? Yet, if all the lords and law-givers are like Wellington, in the habit of threatening poor devils of authors and booksellers with prosecution, hanging, and destruction, as often as they are about to publish any facts which do not altogether redound to their honour and glory, while they modestly swallow all the *outré* applause which may be bestowed on their luck or their talents for killing men and winning battles, I can no longer be surprised that even Beaufort has maintained his good character up to this present writing, since publishers will quake when heroes bully.

There's no spirit nowadays.

CHAPTER XXV

London, *20th January*.

ANOTHER hero in a passion! Another lover threatens prosecution! No less a personage than that most prolific Plenipo, the Hon. Frederick Lamb, who yesterday called on Stockdale to threaten him, or us, with prosecution, death and destruction, if his conduct towards me in times auld lang syne was printed and published in any part of my *Memoirs*, after Part I., which he acknowledged that his counsel had informed him he could not lay hold of. No wonder that he is sore. I have certainly told, as the Hon. Frederick Lamb was well aware must be the case, harsh truths of him, I confess: but then it will disgust one to think that a man would feel such violent passion for a girl, without the heart to save her from absolute want afterwards. Yet I never deceived him, and I endeavoured to live on nothing, at my nurse's in Somerstown, *pour ses beaux yeux*, as long as I possibly could. When I say nothing I mean nothing, in the literal sense of the word. Frederick had never given me a single shilling up to the time when hard necessity obliged me to accept the Duke of Argyle for my lover.

As to Frederick Lamb's rage at my publishing these facts, he was fully acquainted with my intention; and had he, now that he is in better circumstances, only opened his heart, or even purse, to have given me but a few hundreds, there would have been no book, to the infinite loss of all persons of good taste and genuine morality, and who are judges of real merit. But I hate harping on people's unkindness, and *vice versâ*, I cannot omit to acknowledge the generous condescension of Earl Spencer,

who, though I have not the honour to be in the least acquainted with him, has very repeatedly assisted me. In short, His Lordship has promptly complied with every request for money I ever made to him, merely as a matter of benevolence.

Lord Rivers, with whom I have but a bowing acquaintance, has not only often permitted me to apply to him for money; but once, when I named a certain sum to him, he liberally doubled it; because, as he kindly stated in his letter, he was so truly sorry to think that one who possessed such a generous heart as mine should not be in affluent circumstances. Lord Palmerston also, one fine day, did me a pecuniary service without my having applied to him for it. Neither can I express half the gratitude I feel, and shall entertain to the end of my life, for the steady, active friendship Mr. Brougham has invariably evinced towards me, actuated, as he is, solely by a spirit of philanthropy. When I see a man of such brilliant talents pleading the cause of almost all those persons whose characters I have sketched in these pages, with such honest warmth and benevolence of feeling, as Brougham did yesterday, to say I look up to him and love him, is but a cold description of the sentiments he inspires in my heart.

"A pretty list indeed," said Brougham, alluding to my characters, as advertised in the newspapers by Stockdale. Almost every one of my particular friends is among them! The poor Duke of Argyle! What has he done? I am very angry with you. I don't really think I can shake hands with you."

"I have strictly adhered to the truth."

"Yes; but then, who wants to have their secrets exposed! Secrets, some of them, sixteen years old."

"Who do you think would have entrusted me with their secrets fifteen years ago? Besides, why don't my old friends keep me among them? They are all rich. I have applied to them and they refuse me the bare means of existence. Must I not strive to live by my wits? You say you have not read even the first part of my book. How do you know that it is severe?"

"Well! perhaps not! The Duke of Leinster tells me that it is not severe, nor does it, he says, contain any libel."

"To be sure not! Why, as His Grace goes on, he will find that I give him credit for a little more intellect than even a Newfoundland dog! *Que voulez-vous?* But I wish to explain the Duke of Beaufort's conduct, certainly."

"Aye! true! The Duke of Beaufort treated you shamefully. You are very welcome to tell the world that I am your counsel in that business; that I said then, and repeat now, that he took a shameful advantage of your generosity. There, you behaved only too well."

"Thus then, though many of you are angry with me, you all agree in being disgusted with the heartless selfishness of the Duke of Beaufort. The Duke of Portland says he cannot conceive or understand it. So say Montagu, Fred Bentinck, Headfort, yourself: in short, if Beaufort means to fight all those who call his treatment of me infamous, he may gain the high-sounding epitaph of fighting Bob before he knows where he is: so farewell Beaufort. I would not change hearts with you. May you meet with all the respect you merit here, and forgiveness hereafter. I have certainly deserved better from you."

"Well! never mind Beaufort," said Brougham, "tell all the truth of him; but, as to the others, pray don't be severe. Write something from your fancy, I cannot endure the idea of all this. You perhaps do not address your letters correctly when you want money. You are so careless. I was once desired to send you some in a great hurry, and there was no date to your letter! I am sure these old friends of yours would provide for you, if applied to civilly."

"I tell you, you judge of them by your own excellent heart: you, who have never refused me any assistance I asked you for, nor any act of friendship in your power, while I have not nor never had any claim upon you. There is the Duke of Argyle, who used to write thus:

"If at any future time you are in trouble and will condescend to apply to me, you shall be as welcome as my sister; for indeed, I am afraid, I love you.

"Well, I have, at His Grace's request, condescended to apply civilly, stating my distress, and humbly entreating for anything he could conveniently afford, at least fifty times: and I have never received one single shilling, nor any proof of friendship since it pleased him to become *le beau papa*. Everybody who knows me will admit that I have all my life been disposed to like Argyle, to pardon all his sins against me, and inspire others with a favourable opinion of his heart and character; but the invariable excessive selfishness and want of feeling which His Grace evinces towards me has, at length, I confess, disgusted me."

I have a few more high characters in reserve to sketch for the benefit of my readers; but they are too noble and brilliant to come in at the fag-end of a work. I mean therefore to conclude these *Memoirs*, and take my rest for a month or so, in order to collect my ideas for a new work in two volumes, which ought to be printed on the most expensive hot-pressed vellum, wholly and solely for the express purpose of immortalising His Grace of Richmond, the Marquis of Londonderry, Lord Maryborough, Grand Master of the Mint, and of the Art of Love, and Mr. Arthur Chicester, contrary to their particular wishes; and at his own earnest, urgent and especial desire expressed in a letter now in my possession, the Earl of Clanricarde.

Oh muse, etc., etc., etc., grant me eloquence to do justice to my subjects on that great and mighty occasion! In the meantime let me conclude, or rather let us proceed to draw these anecdotes into something like the form of a conclusion, because I their writer am tired of them, if you the reader of them are not.

My friend Rosabella permitted her interesting son to pass a week with my impudent nephew, George Woodcock, on our return to Paris.

"What would you give to be as clever as Carlo?" said I, on the day after he had left us to return to his college.

"Clever!" repeated George, in a tone of infinite contempt. "Clever! He is the greatest ass in the world. Why he plays at cricket in gloves! Clever indeed! Only come and see him swim!"

My sister Fanny never came to the continent, and, when I again joined her in London some months afterwards, I found her in very indifferent spirits.

"In vain do I strive," said Fanny to me, "I cannot get the better of Parker's marriage, and I never shall."

One day, while I was dressing to drive out in my carriage, my servant informed me that Fanny had just called on me, and was in the drawing-room. I was surprised that she did not come up to my bedroom, that being her constant habit whenever I happened to be at my toilette. I hurried on my pelisse, and went down to join her. She was sitting near the window, with her head reclined on her hand, and appeared more than usually pensive.

"My dear Fanny," said I, "what is the matter? Why did not you come upstairs?"

'I feel a weight here," said she, laying her hand on her heart. "It is not a weight of spirits only; but there is something not right here. I am sick and faint."

"A drive in Hyde Park will do you good," said I, and we were soon seated in the carriage. Turning down Baker Street we saw Colonel Parker. Fanny was greatly agitated. He did not seem to have observed us.

"I dare say he is only just come to town, and means to call and see his child," said I, hoping to enliven her. We then drove twice up the Park, and Fanny made an effort to answer the beaux who flocked around the carriage, with cheerfulness. Suddenly she complained to me again of sickness, occasioned by some pressure or tightness about the heart.

"I am sorry to take you from this gay scene," said poor Fanny, "but I am too unwell to remain." I immediately pulled the check-string, and desired my coachman to drive to Hertford Street, Mayfair, where Fanny was then residing. After remain-

ing with her half an hour she begged me to leave her, while she endeavoured to obtain a little sleep. She made light of the sickness, and told me to call and take her into the Park on the following day. I did so, and, just as I was stepping out of my carriage in Hertford Street for that purpose, Lord Hertford came running downstairs to join me, from Fanny's apartment.

"Don't get out, Harriette," said he, "as you will only lose time; but go directly for a surgeon. I was going myself. Fanny is very ill, and her physician has prescribed bleeding, without loss of time."

In the most extreme agitation I hurried after the surgeon and brought him with me in my carriage. Fanny was now affected with such a violent palpitation of the heart that its pulsations might be distinctly seen at the opposite side of the room through her handkerchief.

"I am very ill, Harriette," said the dear sufferer, with encouraging firmness, holding out her hand to me; "but don't frighten yourself. I shall soon get better: indeed I shall. Bleeding will do me good directly," continued she, observing, with affectionate anxiety, the fast gathering tears in my eyes.

I called Lord Hertford aside, and addressed him: "Tell me, I earnestly implore you, most candidly and truly, do you think Fanny will recover?"

"I do not think she ever will," answered Hertford.

"Nonsense!" said I, forcing my mind by an effort to disagree with him. "Fanny was so perfectly well the day before yesterday, so fresh, and her lips so red and beautiful; and then many people are afflicted with these palpitations of the heart, and recover perfectly."

"If her pulse beat with her heart, I should have hopes; but her pulse is calm, and I have none. Disorders of the heart are incurable."

Instead of wishing to display feeling, Lord Hertford seemed ashamed, and afraid of feeling too much.

For another fortnight, Fanny's sufferings were dreadfully severe, and, being quite aware of her danger, she requested that her body might be examined after her death for the benefit of others. My readers will, I hope, do me the justice to acquit me of affectation, when I say that this subject still affects me so deeply, I cannot dwell upon it. All the world were anxiously, and almost hourly, inquiring if there were hope: Sir William Knighton and Sir John Millman, her medical attendants, gave us none, or very slight hopes, even from the first hour.

Fanny never slept, nor enjoyed a single interval of repose. Her courage and patient firmness exceeded all I had imagined possible, even in a man. Once, and once only, she spoke of Colonel Parker; for it was the study of every moment of her life to avoid giving us pain. Fanny called me to her bedside: it was midnight.

"Harriette, remember, for my sake, not to be very angry with poor Parker. It is true, you have written to say I am ill, and he refuses to come and shake hands with me; but then, believe me, he does not think me so ill as I really am, or he would come. Oblige me by forgiving him! Now talk to me of something else: no more of this, pray!"

I pressed her hand and immediately changed the subject. She begged, when we told her of Lord Hertford having had straw put down by her door, and of all his constant, steady attentions, that, when he came next, she might see him and thank him. In consequence of this request, he was admitted on the following morning. Fanny was not able to talk much; but she seemed gratified and happy to see him. When His Lordship was about to depart, she held out her hand to him. Hertford said, in a tone of much real feeling, "God bless you, poor thing," and then left the room.

A monster, in the shape of a nurse to Colonel Parker's child, Louisa, took this opportunity to remain out with the infant the whole of the night! I will no longer dwell on this subject; for, indeed, I cannot.

Fanny was my only friend on earth. I had no sister but her. She was my hope, and my consoler in affliction, ever eloquent in my defence, and would not have forsaken me to have become the wife of an emperor, but God willed Fanny's death.

> I saw her laid low in her kindred vaults,
> And her immortal part with angels lives.

Only three weeks had elapsed since Fanny's lovely laughing countenance, as she drove round the ring in Hyde Park, excited the admiration of all who beheld her. Her life was ebbing fast, when her friends acceded to her earnest desire to be removed to a more airy situation.

Reclined at length on a couch, in her new apartment, Fanny's spirits appeared so much improved as to encourage hopes which had become extinct.

"Do you not breathe with rather less pain?" I asked, while I pressed her cold damp hand between my own.

"At all events," answered poor Fanny, "I would rather die here, than in the close apartment I have just quitted. How sweet and refreshing the flowers smelt, as I was carried along the garden! I did not see them, for I could not endure the light. I wish I could," continued Fanny, fixing her clear, still lovely blue eyes on my face beseechingly. "The prospect, I understand, is most beautiful from the room above us; but I shall never see it."

"Do, dearest Fanny," said I, making a violent effort to conceal my tears, lest they should agitate my suffering sister, "let me open one of the shutters a very little. The air is mild and delicious, and the heat no longer oppressive, as it was when you passed through the garden."

The last ray of the setting sun fell on poor Fanny's pale, beautiful features, as I drew back the curtains. It was one of those lovely evenings in the month of June, which often succeed a thunderstorm, and the honeysuckles, which clustered round the windows, emitted a rich and fragrant perfume.

I asked her if the fresh air did not enliven her a little.

She requested to have her head raised, and I rested it on my bosom.

"Alas!" said poor Fanny, "gloriously as the sun is setting, I may now behold it for the last time!"

Cold drops hung on her fair, lovely forehead. I feared that the slightest agitation would destroy at once the fragile being I held in my arms, and yet, mastered by the strong impulse of irresistible tenderness, I suddenly imprinted a kiss on my sister's dying lips.

The last tear poor Fanny ever shed trembled in her eyes. Forcing a smile, I now endeavoured to address her with cheerfulness, and administered her last draught of goat's milk, which she held firmly in her hand without requiring my assistance.

"I did not believe I should shed another tear," said Fanny, brushing away the drops which were stealing slowly down her fair, wan cheeks. "Pray for me, Harriette! Pray that my sufferings may soon cease."

"I do pray for you, my poor sister, and God knows how earnestly. Be assured, dearest, that your sufferings will very soon cease. You will recover, or you will be at rest for ever. Remember my love, that we have all committed many faults, and you may be called upon to suffer yet a few more hours, as your only punishment, before you are permitted to rest eternally with your God. Yet a little fortitude, my dearest Fanny. It is all that will be required of you."

Fanny seemed deeply impressed with what I had said. Her agony was at that moment dreadfully severe. She crossed her hands on her breast, and there was something sublime in the stern expression her features assumed, while she suppressed the cries which nature would almost have wrung from her. She compressed her lips, and her brow was contracted. In this attitude, with her eyes raised to heaven, she appeared a martyr, severe in virtue and almost masculine fortitude.

"I am better," said Fanny, half an hour after having made this strong effort.

"Thank God!" I ejaculated, taking hold of her hand.

"What o'clock is it?" she inquired.

"Near seven."

"I am very sleepy. I could sleep, if you would promise to continue holding my hand, and would not leave me."

I placed myself close to my sister, with her cold damp hand clasped between both of mine.

"I am near you, always, dearest," said I. "Sleeping or waking, I shall never leave you more." Fanny threw her arms once more round my neck, and with a convulsive last effort pressed me to her heart.

"May the Almighty for ever bless you!" said she, and, sinking back on her pillow, a gentle sleep stole on her senses. I watched her lovely countenance with breathless anxiety.

In less than an hour poor Fanny opened her eyes and fixed them on me with a bright smile, expressive of the purest happiness.

"I am quite well," said Fanny, in a tone of great animation.

Again her eyes closed and her breathing became shorter.

Suddenly, a slight convulsion of the upper lip induced me to place my trembling hand on my sister's heart.

I felt it beat!

Joy flushed my face with a momentary hectic——

And then, hope fled for ever!

Fanny's cheek, still warm and lovely, rested on her arm. The expression of pain and agony was exchanged for the calm, still, innocent smile of a sleeping infant.

I had felt the last faint vibration of poor Fanny's heart.

It was some time previous to the death of my sister, that I was induced by the advice of Mr. Brougham and Mr. Treslove to commence proceedings against the Duke of Beaufort for the recovery of the small annuity he had thought fit to deprive me of.

I have already related the circumstance of my having refused to marry Lord Worcester over and over again, solely to relieve the minds of his parents, and further went down to Oxford to

implore Worcester, by all his future hopes of happiness, to pass his solemn word to the Duke and Duchess never to marry me; and it was only at my request he could be induced to promise to go abroad for one year, on condition that his father made me an allowance. This the Duke gladly agreed to, and sent Worcester to me, accompanied by his attorney, to ask me what I required.

"Enough to pay for my board only," was my reply. "Nor do I require bonds or signatures. The Duke is a gentleman, and will take care that the person who has complied with all his wishes shall not come to want. Of that I am well satisfied."

Robinson told me to fear nothing, and down I went into Devonshire, where I might have wanted bread, without obtaining a shilling or an answer to any one of my letters addressed to His Grace, had I not, after waiting four or five months, been obliged to threaten that I would join Worcester in Spain. This, and this only, brought a polite letter, enclosing two quarters of the promised allowance, from His Grace.

I should like to know if His Grace or his noble son will take upon them to deny any of these facts, or that he did not desire me to make my own terms if I would not marry Worcester? and for which, all the world are crying "Off! Off! Off!" to the Duke of Beaufort, just as if he were Kean the actor. At all events, the facts I am now proceeding to relate were public.

Neither Brougham nor Treslove could be induced to believe that, since the Duke of Beaufort had bestowed a small annuity on me for the purpose of separating me from Lord Worcester, it could ever be His Grace's wish to rob me of that annuity, while the intent and purpose of it was fulfilled. I had indeed written a few lines to Lord Worcester, trusting to their humanity to forgive me for the exercise of mine; but, since my letter did not interrupt the object of the bond, which was to separate us, nobody would believe that the Duke wished to throw on the world me, who might have been his daughter, without the means of existence.

"The Duke will prefer giving you fifty thousand pounds," said the Duke's attorney to me.

My answer was, "Were I selfish, I would marry Worcester."

To satisfy these incredulous gentlemen, I renewed my applications to His Grace; but they were unattended to, as before.

As the day of trial drew near, I expressed my astonishment to my legal advisers that they wished me to bring forward a case like this, which I must inevitably lose if Lord Worcester produced the letter I wrote to him, which was directly in the teeth of the conditions of the bond.

"Fear nothing," was Brougham's answer. "Lord Worcester cannot appear in it without irremediable disgrace and loss of character."

"How can you imagine it possible," asked Brougham, "that Lord Worcester, the man who for years together has sworn to make you his wife, can appear in evidence against you, for the purpose of leaving you destitute, and effectually robbing you of the trifling independence which you were gracious enough to be satisfied with, when you might have been Duchess of Beaufort?"

I was at last almost convinced that Lord Worcester could not act thus.

"If he does he ought to be ashamed of himself," said Fred Bentinck, "and so I shall tell him. I always tell everybody exactly what I think of them, for my part."

The day of trial arrived. The very hour approached, and Worcester had not obeyed his father's peremptory summons to come up to town and attend as evidence against me. The Duke, knowing there could be no other witness, was in a terrible fever of agitation, as my attorney told me.

Just at the last, when the furious Duke had given up all hopes of his son, he, in a great fright, proposed to my attorney to pay him twelve hundred pounds, rather than stand the event of the trial alone, and Brougham had scarcely given his written consent to this compromise, which was immediately signed, when the most liberal, generous, high-minded, and noble Marquis of Worcester stepped out of his travelling carriage,

and came driving towards the scene of action, with my poor, ill-fated letter in his hand. Such at least is my attorney's account of the business. He may be referred to by the incredulous. I was not present.

Thus was I indebted to the Duke's fears of wanting a witness, or being hissed out of court, for the sum of twelve hundred pounds, which was handed to me as soon as I had accompanied the attorney to Westminster Hall and taken the following oath:

"The King's Bench,

"Between Harriette Wilson, Plt.

and

"His Grace the Duke of Beaufort, Deft.

"Harriette Wilson of the above named plaintiff, maketh oath, and saith that she hath, in the schedule hereunder written, set forth a full and true list of all the letters, papers, and writings in her possession, or power, written by the Marquis of Worcester to this deponent, and that she hath not retained or delivered to any person, any copies, or extracts of them, or any or either of them, save and except any extract that this deponent may have sent or delivered to the above defendant."

And now good-bye Beaufort.

I forgot to mention my having met with Lord Francis Conyngham, now Earl of Mount Charles, in Paris, with whose beauty I was much attracted. There was nothing national in his manner, nor, I think, in his character. He was perhaps rather cold; but amiable and truly unaffected. Such as he was, I remember he interested me very much. I did not fall in love with him, partly because he had the tremendous bad taste not to fall in love with me; but his ill health and his cough induced me to encourage somewhat of the tenderness of a mamma towards him; and I used to dream about his eyes, they were so very blue and beautiful.

I have often met the young Marquis of Graham too, who is not very popular, as I am told; but that is nothing to me.

Any fool may be popular: it is the easiest thing in the world. Only be a good listener and praise everybody on the face of the earth, that is the whole fact.

However, Lord Graham is rather reserved; *mais ne méprisez pas les personnes froides; elles ont leurs bons côtés.* Lord Graham is very just, friendly, and strictly honourable, neither is he the stupid person many imagine him to be. For my own part, I like Lord Graham, and always have had reason to like him; and I am sure Beau Brummell would like him, because his clothes are uniformly so well made and in such good taste.

My readers will believe that my poor sister's death affected me deeply, and my health suffered seriously from my anxiety and want of rest. About two days after I had seen my dear sister buried. Amy appeared to feel something like compassion for the weak state in which she found me. She suddenly took me in her arms, and told me she feared I should die, and then burst into a flood of tears, as she added that she knew well she had never been kind to me!

Everything was forgiven from my heart and soul at that moment; but Amy soon ran up a fresh score of offences, just in her usual way.

I cannot in justice help relating Sophia's kind attention to her sister Fanny in her last moments. Not that there was merit in one sister loving another, who was too amiable ever to have made a single enemy in her life: one whom the most cold-blooded and unfeeling could not but love: yet still I am glad I can, with truth, affirm that Sophia did her duty in this instance, and Amy also, in the daytime. The night-watching devolved entirely on me; but whoever else might have watched poor Fanny I would never have quitted her.

From the hour of my sister's death, my dearest mother's health visibly declined, and exactly three months after Fanny had breathed her last, I followed my parent to her grave. From that period I was for more than two months confined to my room, and, generally, to my bed, with a violent liver complaint, or I know not what.

"It is liver," said Doctor Bree, "and she must swallow plenty of mercury."

"No such thing," said Doctor Nevinson. "It is neither more nor less than over-excitement of the nerves, with too much anxiety, fatigue, and distress of mind."

"All this has disordered her liver," reiterated Doctor Bree, who has written a book on people's livers.

"I won't stand it," said Doctor Nevinson; "and, before Harriette begins upon your mercury, I will call in Dr. Pemberton."

"Never mind that cough, ma'am," said Pemberton: you may keep it till you are eighty, and it will be an amusement to you. It is only a nervous cough."

However I continued very ill in spite of all these gentlemen could do for me.

When my spirits and health were at their very worst, I was informed that poor Julia was dying and wanted to see me. I could not refuse her request. Her features bore the fixed rigidity of death when I entered her room. Her complaint, like her late poor friend's, was a disease of the heart, and there was no remedy.

She talked much of her dear Fanny, and said she had been certain from the first that she should soon follow her to the grave.

I insisted on writing to Napier, who was at Melton Mowbray.

"No! no!" said poor Julia. "If you will lend me your carriage, I am sure I shall be able to join him in a few days. I shall soon be better."

I wrote notwithstanding, and Napier came to her, kneeled by her bedside, read the service of the dead, and then—and then he again read prayers to her. All this he afterwards told me himself.

"You must have killed her," said I, "in so dreadfully weak a state as she was in."

This conversation took place some weeks after her death.

"Nonsense," replied Napier. "Why say such cruel unfeeling

things to me? Upon my honour, there was no chance for poor, sweet, dear Julia, who was the image of death when I—— Oh Julia! Angel Julia! I cannot bear it!" he added, pulling his hair, and throwing the handsome pillows of my new sofa all about the room.

"*Doucement! doucement! s'il vous plait*," I observed. "Julia was my friend, I regret her certainly; but my feelings are so deeply affected by the death of my adored mother, whom God knows how I have loved, that there is scarcely room in my heart for any other grief, and, at all events, I don't quite see the use of your knocking my new sofa about."

"Very true," said Napier, suddenly jumping up; and, having wiped his eyes with the back of his hand, he began briskly to make fierce love to me.

"But Julia?" said I.

"Oh, Julia!" retorted he, banging another pillow on the ground, "I had her laid out in state, and wax candles were kept burning round her coffin for a fortnight: and I paid half of all her debts!"

"Suppose you had paid the whole?"

"Nonsense! They were very thankful for half."

"And what is to become of her poor children?"

"A noble relative has taken one, and Lord Folkestone another, and Mrs. Armstrong is consulting me about the rest."

There was nothing on earth, not even Fanny nor Lord Ponsonby, I ever loved, as I loved my mother. I do not dwell on the subject, nor in the manner of her death; because it is to me a very sacred one. No one, not even Amy, will call my affection for that beloved, that sainted parent, in question.

I am now about to return to Paris, from where I propose sending Stockdale this volume or continuation of my *Memoirs*, provided you are all grateful and civil for the trouble I have already given myself; but I will pause now, at this period of my endeared parent's death; for my habits and character became more serious and melancholy from that hour. Meyler's sudden death too, which happened soon afterwards, certainly added

much to those cold, desponding sensations, with which I was now often affected.

One night I dreamed that I saw my dearest mother standing at the top of a high hill or mountain: so high that her head seemed almost to touch the clouds, and her drapery was of such indefinite texture, that I doubted whether I saw a shadow or a real substance. She looked very pale and beautifully placid, as she pointed towards the heavens, fixing her eyes on my face.

I would have given half my existence when I awoke for such another dream! Having, in that hope, vainly courted sleep for several hours, my mind being deeply impressed with the subject, I sat down. I imagined the vision subjoined, with which I will for the present conclude, after wishing to all, a good night and pleasant dreams, and slumbers light.

A VISION

As balmy sleep had charmed my cares to rest,
And love itself was banished from my breast,
A train of phantoms, in wild order, rose,
And, joined, this intellectual scene, compose.

METHOUGHT a spirit beckoned me, from the height of a steep mountain: its drapery appeared to be now of earthly texture, and anon but the bright rays of the sun, glittering on a cloud, which enveloped the form of an angel. Her beautiful features were benignly placid. The shadowy paleness of her countenance seemed as though touched by the moon's softest beam; yet it was the bright sun, in the meridian of its splendour, and oppressed me with its heat. To ascend the vast acclivity of the mountain presented a work of such danger and fatigue that I hesitated. The spirit turned from me with an expression of tender sorrow. Its profile, which now became visible, was familiar to me! I threw myself on my knees and raised my clasped hands to Heaven! "I will endure thy sun's scorching rays, O God of Mercy!" said I, "with the toils and perils of this thorny road, in meek resignation to thy Divine will. Grant me but life to accomplish the task!"

A smile now irradiated the features of the beautiful vision. Hope, doubt, and anxiety were blended in its expression, while the calm of angels' happiness prevailed, as though the spirit had passed the ordeal of human sufferings. She pointed with her right hand to the heavens; and, as she raised her eyes in the same direction, I saw a seraphic, radiant smile illumine her countenance for an instant, and then the figure was indistinctly

veiled by the clouds, into which, gradually blending, it receded from my sight into thin air. My tears now fell in despondency at the dangers and labour of the task I had undertaken; yet I toiled on with indefatigable industry. "Oh! for the light of thy benign countenance, to cheer me on my dreary road," said I, sighing heavily. "Yet no! rest thou in pure eternal happiness, unclouded by the sight of early sufferings."

The sharp, burning stones and flints wounded my feet and caused me extreme anguish. At length, exhausted in body, though unsubdued in mind, I sunk down on the earth, hoping, by a short interval of rest, to recover my strength. Suddenly, the air was fanned with soft refreshing breezes; the feathered choir chanted their enlivening strains; the trees about me were covered with ripe, delicious fruit; luxurious repasts were profusely spread in groves, where nymphs enjoyed the fragrant shades, or danced and gambolled in wild and careless gaiety. A lovely female, fantastically though tastefully habited, smilingly entreated me to turn from my thorny road and follow her; but gay luxury possessed no charms for one who ambitioned higher joys. Hunger, thirst, and labour, with the goal of happiness in view, were more suited to my character, nor dreamed I of merit in declining mere senseless ease. Again I prostrated myself on the earth, and, pressing my hands to my burning temples, prayed for strength sufficient to keep out despondency.

The gates of pleasure now were closed upon me. My head became giddy. My lungs were oppressed, and I was sinking to the earth, when I felt myself withheld, by the firm grasp of someone behind me, who placed me gently on the ground, and presented to my lips some fruit, which instantly revived me.

On opening my eyes, I beheld at my side an aged man, whose white beard descended to his middle, "I am called Fortitude," said he. "My hand alone can lead you to the summit of your wishes. We will perform our task together. Nor will I forsake you till you forsake yourself."

Invigorated by the fruits which were presented to me by Fortitude, and comforted with the prospect of a friend to guide

my trembling steps, we now continued our way along the pathless, barren track of the mountain, which seemed to mock my eagerness and retire as I advanced.

Suddenly, the atmosphere was impregnated with the odour of the Indian berry, which grew in immense quantities around me. My senses were affected by it, and a voluptuous indolence began to steal over me. My hand shrunk from the grasp of Fortitude, who continued his firm and undeviating road, frequently beckoning me to follow him. My eagerness now relaxed. My senses were overpowered, and I scarcely regretted my stern guide, when the windings of the mountain concealed him from my sight. At this time, I beheld, coming towards me, a being of extraordinary beauty. His age might be near thirty, judging by the strong growth of a beard, which curled in rich abundance over his chin; but his dark blue eye of fire told him younger.

"I am called Passion," said he. "There lies your road to Peace and Happiness," and he pointed to the height of the mountain. "Misery is here, and, though left of all when you forsake me, I scorn to complain. I deceive none but the weak and the wilful. If this bursting heart, this writhing lip speak not, leave me to the fate I deserve, and which I shall meet undismayed. Misery lies this way," repeated Passion, tearing his luxurious hair in all the frenzy of maddened sensation, while his teeth gnawed his nether lip till the red current disfigured a mouth of unequalled loveliness. He was turning from me with rapidity.

"Stay," said I faintly. He snatched me to his heart in all the wildness of frenzy. His heaving bosom seemed to threaten suffocation. His ardent gaze, and the liquid fire flashing from his eyes, dazzled and bewildered me. They spoke of feelings but guessed at by our softer nature; yet coloured by our sanguine minds even beyond reality. The pulsations of his heart were seen, nay almost heard; and still he curbed the passion which was consuming him; and still he had not pressed the lip, which quivered with delicious expectation. Now, with an

effort almost supernatural, he threw me from him. His cheeks, late vermillion glow, were changed to the ashy paleness of death; his Herculean strength to the feebleness of infancy.

"Pursue thy happier path," said he, in accents scarcely audible, "nor seek thy destruction."

I threw myself on his bosom——. The delirium was succeeded by total insensibility, from which I slowly recovered, and, opening my languid eyes, I beheld myself in the arms of a hideous satyr!

The fright and horror which I experienced awoke me.

THE END

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Brummell, George, (1778-1840, generally known as "Beau Brummell", educated at Eton, captain in 10th Hussars in 1796, friend of the Prince Regent, later George IV, leader of fashion in London, retired to Calais in debt in 1816, and later died in an asylum in Caen), at the opera, 37; at Amy's party, 40; his inmost soul,

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Denman, Thomas, (first Baron Denman, 1779-1854; Lord Chief Justice; Barrister of Lincolns Inn, 1806; Deputy Recorder of Nottingham, and M.P. for Wareham, 1818; Solicitor-General to Queen Caroline; procured (with Brougham) the withdrawal of Lord Liverpool's bill of pains and penalties against Queen Caroline, establishing her innocence; looked upon by George IV as a slanderer, but smoothed over by the Duke of Wellington. Resigned Lord Chief Justice, 1850), most respected Judge, 620; and hanging, 621.
Devonshire, Duke of, (the sixth Duke, 1790-1858; British Envoy at the coronation of the Czar Nicholas I; Lord Chamberlain, 1827-8), visits Harriette at the opera, 34; and Harriette's severity, 35; at the opera, 36; Fanny's probable sympathy for, 69; collection of pictures, 273; pictures, fortune, parties of, 274; dress party of, 514; receives the guests at the masquerade at Wattier's Club, 580; presents the guests with tickets for a raffle at Wattier's Club masquerade, 581.
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Ebers, John, (operatic manager, 1785?-1830? lessee of the King's Theatre, opening it in 1821 with La Gazza Ladra. Produced Italian opera, ruined by enormous rent of the theatre, 1826. Became a bookseller, publishing *Seven Years of the King's Theatre*, 1828), and Harriette's trouble, 449; Harriette sends for, 451; and the intruders in Harriette's box at the opera, 452.
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Ellenborough, Lord, (first Lord Ellenborough, 1750-1818; Lord Chief Justice of England; barrister Lincolns Inn, 1780; K.C., 1787; retained as leading counsel for Warren Hastings, 1788; opended the defence, 1792; knighted, 1801; M.P. for Newton, Isle of Wight, 1801; Lord Chief Justice of England, 1802; resigned office, 1818), his clever son, 621; his son cross-examines, 622-3.

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Elliston, Robert William, (1774-1831. Actor. Acted Hamlet at reopening of Drury Lane, 1812; lessee and the manager of Drury Lane, 1819-26; bankrupt 1826. Was an eccentric), Harriette writes about, 222; acts in "Wild Oats", 224; "makes free," 225; scene with coachman, 226; scene with a woman, 227; and Livius White says, 228; is drunk, 229; masquerade, 239; good performance of, 249; drunk, 250; throws himself in the pit, 251; goes to sleep, 252; his masquerade, 256; 262; drunk, as usual, 287; makes a speech, 288; Harriette sends her play to, 522; letter to Harriette, 523; Harriette never hears about her farce from, 524.

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